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53, Gower Street.

THE MARQUISE DE VILLAVIEJA AND HER CHILDREN.



THE Journal for all interested in

Country Life and Country Pursuits

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HERBERT SPENCER.

STRENUOUS intellectual labour seems to be as well calculated to promote long life as open-air exercise itself. Nearly all the giants of the last century attained to patriarchal years. Carlyle and Darwin and Ruskin and Tennyson had each passed the fourscore when he died. And now the last of a great band of thinkers, Herbert Spencer, has passed away at the ripe age of eighty-three. The remarkable point is that he was born with an apparently feeble constitution, and one of the problems of his existence was to keep himself in a fit condition for work. After writing a great book, he was usually so prostrated that he almost lost hopes of getting well again. Yet until quite recently he retained his mental faculties in the fullest vigour. What is known as dotage does not seem to come to men of strenuous life in the same manner that it attacks those who have lived easily and listlessly. And Herbert Spencer lived a more purely intellectual life than almost any man of his age. His name will be for ever associated with that of Darwin, but the difference between them scarcely needs stating. Darwin was a great experimentalist, a stupendous collector of facts, a master of grouping and arrangement, and the most accomplished scientific man of his age. Herbert Spencer, on the other hand, was equally expert at grouping his facts, but he did so with the deliberate purpose of drawing conclusions from them. It would require someone of wider grasp than the present writer to allot him his true place as a philosopher. Some would place him next to Aristotle himself, and at all events he was a great Aristotelian. Someone has said that every man must be born either a Platonist or an

Aristotelian, and Carlyle was not more certainly on the one side than Herbert Spencer was on the other. Perhaps it was that very fact that kept him from satisfactorily fulfilling the dearest object of his ambition, which was to draw up a system that would leave no department of human thought and activity uncovered. In the early part of his work he succeeded to admiration, and his synthetic philosophy is as it were a landmark of our era. But when he came to touch the things of the spirit he was not so satisfactory. It may be because here he touched upon regions not yet explored. Among the discoveries of the century now at its dawn there may possibly be some demonstration that matter and spirit are one, and that the ultimate atom is the foundation of both. At least, that is how thought trends at the moment; but the discovery of radium and other events not less momentous are already beginning to demand a readjustment of theories that have been ripening for two thousand years.

Spencer's nature, however, was not one that willingly dwelt on the mysterious and the inexplicable. His attitude of mind was always that of one who feels certain that the most unaccountable of occurrences must have a rational explanation if you can only find it. And it was that splendid reasoning power of his that gave cogency and force and vitality to all that he uttered. No doubt finality was the one thing wanting, but in his age finality was impossible. Other workers in other fields must harvest the fruit of their labour before philosophy can bring it all into one divine harmony. Herbert Spencer performed no greater service to his age than that of teaching its thinkers to think. Take such a work as that of Mr. Andrew Lang in the domain of folk-lore. It is purely and simply the application of Spencerian principles to the early institutions of humanity, and he who studies the growth of civilisation from its first rudimentary appearance as we emerge from the animal to its present complication, will read Spencer with a new avidity as a master mind, showing with unerring finger a way over morass and desert that otherwise would be impassable. Probably enough writers of the next generation will find much to expand, much to correct in what he has written—that is a necessity of the situation. Charles Darwin created a new heaven and a new earth, and several generations must pass away before we are finally adjusted to them. If a line were drawn between the time before and the time after him it would be seen that the two are utterly distinct. Not on science only, but on poetry and the other fine arts, is the influence felt. The old inspiration has ceased, and we have not yet become familiar, or perfectly familiar, with the new. How much is due to Darwin himself, and how much to Herbert Spencer, it would be impossible to say with any certainty just now.

If, however, we turn from consideration of the greatness of the work performed by Spencer, and look merely upon his personal figure, his life is a very interesting one, though perhaps it was more so to the elders than to the young people of the time. We think of him mostly in connection with the great figures of the mid-nineteenth century. He was the friend of George Eliot, and the extent to which her novels are coloured by his philosophy is well known to every literary student. Indeed, it may be said, without any disrespect to Spencer, that as literature they would have been better without his influence, for imagination does not work at its best when crushed under the heel of fact. On men like Tyndall and Huxley it had a much more beneficent effect. They were at one with him in all essentials and engaged in working out details that almost might be called a by-product of his philosophy. Although Spencer did not himself command a style deserving of imitation, but, on the contrary, was content to get his thoughts down even with a barbarous harshness, yet literary men fell under his sway, and indeed twenty or thirty years ago the less substantial of the young writers of the time were in the habit of spoiling what faculty of composition had been given them by copying his defects. But those who were far above doing that nevertheless followed with zest the thoughts to which his speculative mind gave birth. Even Tennyson, with that rare faculty of his for assimilating the thought of his age, took the Spencerian philosophy and put it into a little poem that satisfied the Spencerians themselves. And the last verse of that poem may stand as the epitaph of Herbert Spencer:

"I have climb'd to the snows of Age and I gaze at a field in the Past,
Where I sank with the body at times in the sloughs of a low desire,
But I hear no yelp of the beast, and the Man is quiet at last
As he stands on the heights of his life with a glimpse of a height that is higher."

Our Portrait Illustration.

OUR frontispiece for this week is a portrait of the Marquise de Villavieja, daughter of the Marquis de Salamanca. Her husband, the Marquis de Villavieja, is a well-known polo player, who started a polo club in Paris ten years ago.



FROM the contradictory telegrams that come to us from the Far East it is very difficult to obtain a clue to the real situation. That the majority of the Japanese would eagerly welcome a war with Russia appears to be evident. On commercial grounds, and for territorial reasons, the average Jap believes that such a struggle could only result advantageously. Japan is a young, or rather a rejuvenated, nation. She has imbibed Western ideas of civilisation, and with them a natural wish for expansion, but the arms of Russia lie like an iron band restraining her. Until they are thrown off Japan can never enter upon the career mapped out for her. On the other hand, the wary old statesmen who have the management of affairs see the dangers attendant upon so colossal a warfare, and shrink from bringing their differences to the stern arbitrament of war. The question seems to be whether or not their prudence will be overcome by the wishes of the multitude. Russia, on the other hand, has every reason to avoid this encounter. It is an open secret that dissatisfaction is increasing within her border, and that her Army, like that of Germany, is honeycombed with communism and socialism. Thus, until events develop further, it would be unwise to form any definite conclusion. The unexpected now as always is sure to happen.

President Roosevelt's message to Congress may be described as a tranquillising document. At the present moment the atmosphere of the United States is not disturbed by any acute controversy, either as regards foreign or colonial policy. The subject of keenest interest dealt with in the message is that of Trusts. President Roosevelt clearly, though in somewhat abstract terms, lays down the principle that ought to guide those who are dealing with this modern form of monopoly. It is advisable on every account that the individual should enjoy as much freedom as is consistent with justice to his fellow-citizens, but, on the other hand, if an unscrupulous use is made of this right the Government would have good reason for interfering. As far as these generalities go they must command the assent of mankind. Anybody can make an admirable speech on Trusts and Combinations. The difficulty arises when the principles have to be applied to a concrete case. Then it is found that the simplest theory bears many interpretations. On other questions the President addressed his own people more particularly than foreigners, and the message altogether was that which we naturally expect to hear from a country which is quietly prospering.

Glad as we all should be if a satisfactory Arbitration Treaty could be concluded between Great Britain and the United States, it is impossible not to perceive that the present moment for the agitation to that good end which is proceeding in the States is not a very fortunately chosen one, seeing that the Presidential election is now close at hand, and that the opponents of the Republican party would undoubtedly make capital out of such a treaty to influence votes unfavourably to the present Government in that country. The settlement of the Alaskan Boundary difficulty, which gave so little satisfaction in Canada, has at least the great merit of having removed an important obstacle to the conclusion of such a treaty. With a little patience it is not unreasonable to hope for its ultimate conclusion, but it will hardly be assisted even by the most well-meant efforts at the wrong moment; and that the present moment is not an opportune one is bound to be the opinion of those who will give the subject an unprejudiced consideration.

Sir Patrick Manson delivered a remarkable address on Monday night at the London School of Tropical Medicine. To the layman his most interesting remarks related to Beri-Beri, or sleeping sickness. It is an achievement to be proud of that a pupil of the school should have been enabled to discover the germs of this awful disease. As Sir Patrick said, "Could we but remove Beri-Beri from the Malay Peninsula, we would add

enormously to the prosperity of this country." That is but one result of the school's research. Dr. Low's discovery of the way by which elephantiasis and its congeners may be avoided is a most valuable one. Scarcely less so was the practical demonstration by Dr. Sambon and Dr. Low that man can live in the midst of malaria if he only employs simple and practical measures against mosquito bites. The curious experiment by which it was proved absolutely that malaria is conveyed by mosquitos was in itself a wonderful performance. These are only a few examples of what has been achieved by this excellent School of Medicine. Mr. Chamberlain may well be proud of the fact that Sir Patrick Manson publicly declared him to be the mainspring of this movement.

Mr. Akers Douglas in a speech the other day made it tolerably clear that next session the Government will attempt to deal with the vexed question of alien immigration. He said nothing to guide us as to the lines on which they will proceed, but no doubt efficacious methods will be discovered for restraining the destitute Hebrew of various nationalities from getting into the East End to breed corruption by over-crowding and to under-sell native labour. Something must be done, as is admitted even by those who are proudest of the fact that England hitherto has been free for all honest men to come and go at the dictates of their own will. There is something in this tradition that cannot be willingly sacrificed, and yet if we reflect that these aliens bring with them not only filth and poverty, but crime, as may be seen alike from the speeches of our judges and the proceedings at our courts, it would be unfair to the community to refrain from interfering.

DECEMBER.

With scarlet face the holly swings
 Aside from amorous winds that flatter;
 A ghost among grey ghostly things,
 The heron spreads her wide blue wings
 To leave the lochs for open water.
 The teal are feeding down the burn,
 The wild geese to the Solway flying;
 The fairies of the frost return
 To blind our windows with white fern,
 Lest we should see the old year dying.
 Bare are the boughs on Teviot side,
 The dead leaves drift below the beeches;
 Across the cauld the flood-sprites ride,
 And head to stream the hill trout hide
 In dark brown pools and drumlie reaches.
 In Cheviot glens the drifts lie deep,
 Beneath the bank-full Bowmont races;
 The shepherds toil from steep to steep
 Their lonely winter watch to keep
 In mist among the wild blackfaced.
 And capped with snow and grey with years
 One peel-tower stands, a witless warder,
 A sleeping guard that never hears
 Where, backed with one-and-thirty spears,
 December rides across the Border.

WILL H. OGILVIE.

If ever a man deserved the honour of a title, Mr. James Knowles does so, and we are glad to know that the King has invested him with the insignia of a Knight Commander of the Royal Victorian Order with the honour of knighthood. Mr. Knowles has carried out the old Scriptural instruction, be diligent in thy business. It was he who founded, edited, and still owns the *Nineteenth Century*, which holds the field against all comers as the leading monthly. The editor displayed something like genius in his unerring insight into the mind of the public. The *Nineteenth Century* succeeded because the editor knew intuitively what were the great subjects in which his countrymen for the moment were interested, and also whose opinion they were most anxious to hear; and so month after month, at a time when controversy was more the fashion than it is to-day, this periodical came out with an air of inevitability about it. Here were treated the subjects engaging attention, and invariably they were written by the right men.

In the realm of art it is undoubtedly a very high distinction to be elected President of the International Society of Sculptors, Painters, and Engravers. The position until his death was held by the late James McNeill Whistler, which in itself was sufficient to give it dignity, just as the post of Poet Laureate in England was dignified by its having been held in succession by William Wordsworth and Alfred Tennyson. The appointment of M. Rodin is therefore a great event, although in the case of an artist so mannered it is impossible that all should agree as to his fitness. His undoubted ability is to some minds impaired by

a certain tendency to the flamboyant and the theatrical. Nevertheless, his career has been a very fine one, and he is to be congratulated on the reception of this crowning honour.

At a meeting of the Farmers' Club on Monday night a paper was read by Mr. W. A. Simmons on English agriculture that well deserves republication as a pamphlet. He seemed to anticipate that a time had come when farmers might fairly expect a measure of Protection that would put the English farmer on an equality with rivals who, he said, "pay next to no rent, practically no rates and taxes, and whose produce is brought to our markets as cheaply as we can deliver our own." It would be difficult to comment upon this without trenching on what to us is the forbidden ground of fiscal discussion, but undoubtedly Mr. Simmons gave expression to what is in the minds of many of those whose chief interests are in land and agriculture. The difficulty is that while Mr. Chamberlain would seem to be in favour of gratifying their desires, Mr. Balfour and those who work with him are pledged not to tax food.

A very interesting report by the Butters Regulation Committee has been issued by the Board of Agriculture. It is doubtful if any other article of food is adulterated to such an extent as butter. The cheap sorts sold in the shops are scarcely ever pure, some of them tasting no better than lard, while margarine is very freely mixed with the genuine stuff. The difficulty of a committee lies in finding a remedy that will not cause injustice, since the natural butter-fat is open to several changes, in accordance with atmospheric conditions. This makes it difficult to apply an absolute test, though the committee suggest doing so by the amount of volatile acid, while they recommend the "ear marking" of margarine. The countries from which we obtain butter, that is, Norway and Sweden, France and the United States, Denmark and Holland, have all tried to deal with the difficulty, but not successfully. Denmark has a thorough system of control and inspection, but Germany and Austria and Belgium come short in this matter. It is therefore essential that the test should be applied to all butter that is important.

The potato crop in England is a bad one, but in Ireland—the land of the potato—they are even worse off, for in a great many parts the crop is yet in the ground, and, it need hardly be said, in a very precarious situation. Frost seldom visits the Green Isle so early in December as last week, and in consequence a number of farmers were caught napping, or, it should rather be said, had postponed the raising of the crop too long, in the hope of getting a short spell of dry weather. The worst of the frost catching the potatoes in the ground is that the soil is so water-soaked that the frost has more power in drawing the surface, and the danger of injury to the tubers is consequently greater. Where the crop has been lifted reports are very variable. Some say half the crop is lost, some a fourth, while a few say they have noticed little or no disease. Even where there is not much disease the texture of the tubers is much softer than usual.

It is very difficult to forecast the effects that new inventions are likely to produce, and a few years ago not many of us could have prophesied that the rage for motor-cars would cause farm-houses to be let easily, but so it is. Auctioneers and estate agents are finding it difficult to discover a sufficient number of places for their clients. Simultaneously with the advent of the motor-car, it has to be remembered there has come an awakened taste for what is old and beautiful. Elizabethan and Tudor houses are now sought for and prized by twenty people for every one who could appreciate them ten or fifteen years ago. Another change that has come over taste is this. It used to be the first enquiry about a house, How close is it to the station? Those who took a little place in the country wanted the railway station at their elbow. Now the question is, How far is it from the station? for the possessor of a motor-car would rather it were five miles than three. So that places that used to be unsaleable and unlettable can now be got rid of quite easily.

A beautiful feature in the will left by Sir J. Blundell Maple is his legacy of £20,000 to be divided among charitable institutions in London, Harpenden, and St. Albans on Lady Maple's death. Sir John was well entitled to rank as one of London's merchant princes, and this bequest will remind many of the piety to which we owe so many Grammar Schools and other charitable endowments throughout the land. When we think how many more fortunes are made to-day than was the case in the olden time, it is impossible to avoid the reflection that our ancestors were greater than we are in this respect, and that it would be well if such gifts as those of Sir J. Blundell Maple were of less exceptional occurrence.

The picture by Nattier, the French artist, which was sold at Christie's the other day for 3,100 guineas, appears to have had a

curious history. It was bought by its late owner for £5, and until last year it had been hanging for half a century in the dining-room of an Elizabethan house in Essex, near Braintree. John Oates Harrison, a leather furrier, had bought it at his wedding without having the slightest idea of its value, and as long as he lived it hung there, to be sold at his death with his other goods and chattels. However, someone found out that it was exceptionally fine, and reserved the picture for private sale. The highest local offer was £10, hence its appearance at Christie's. We hope the story will not send that arch-fiend, the collector, to harry old houses in the country, in the hope of coming to more treasure trove.

Following hard on the success of the Maori chief in the amateur championship of New Zealand golf, comes the success of Henry, the Queensland aborigine, with the cricket ball. A measure of success he certainly met with against the M.C.C. team, captained by Mr. Warner, that is doing so well in the Colonies; but apart from that particular instance, it implies no small possession of bowling talent that he should be chosen to represent Queensland. It is really rather a wonder, considering the extraordinary eyesight of the Australian aborigines, that none of them should have proved himself an efficient batsman. The faculty of Dick-a-Dick, the native Australian who used to allow the hardest thrower in either Australian or English Eleven to throw at him with a cricket ball from very short range, defending himself only with a short stick that he used as a shield to turn or stop the ball, would seem to argue a batsman's eye such as not even "W. G." at his best possessed.

A NIGHT WATCHER.

All the day I quiet rest
Happ'd within my narrow bed;
Warm and close the turf is spread;
Never bird 'neath mother's breast
Nestling lies so closely pressed.
But at night I gently steal
Through the graveyard gate to thee—
Prying eyes are none to see—
Ah Beloved! each night dost feel
Grief-wounds in a dear dream heal?
Through the dark Morn's young eyes peer:
Tears upon thy lashes lie,—
Tears I may not stay to dry.
In the sighing breeze dost hear
Aught of her who late was near?

ELIZABETH GIBSON.

It would be wholly premature to pass any judgment now on the unfortunate stranding of the *Flora*, a cruiser attached to the Pacific Squadron, but if the detailed account given in the cablegram is correct, to the effect that she struck when going full steam ahead in a dense fog, there is room for some mild surprise that she should not have been slowed down while steaming through the fog off a coast where navigation is known to be through intricate channels. According to the accounts at present to hand, the navigating officer had no doubts whatever of the safety of the course he was pursuing, being guided by a certain beacon. Unfortunately, there were two beacons marking the safe channel, and he had mistaken the one beacon for the other, with the inevitable result that the ship went far astray from the course. The scuttles were open, and she sank quickly, with her bows apparently above the low-water mark. Happily no lives were lost, although the officers' quarters were immediately flooded. The *Flora* was carrying a cargo of coal from Comox to Denman Island, a total distance of only four miles.

Are we to accept Dr. Koch's most startling and alarming prophecy to the Veterinary Conference at Bloemfontein that disease will spread among the cattle, unless checked by inoculation, to such an extent that 90 per cent. of the stock will perish? If we are bound to receive this with all the respect due to his high authority, the prospect is gloomy indeed; and what relieves it not at all is the learned doctor's further statement that even if inoculation be extensively used the mortality still must be very large.

At a late meeting of the Naas (County Kildare) District Council, an extraordinary report was made, complaining of the devastation that rats were working on the graveyard of Oughterard. The old graves had been so burrowed by the rodents that the country-folk were quite scandalised by the desecration. Steps will at once be taken to kill off the rats by poison or some other means, and as the graveyard is surrounded by a high stone wall, it is thought there will be little difficulty in disposing of the invaders. The only trouble is that the owners of lands adjoining the cemetery object to wholesale poisoning.

THE BROOK.

A FEW weeks ago we showed some pictures of a typical English river flowing through a flat country. To-day we present our readers with some illustrations of a brook in a landscape of a similar kind. We doubt if there is any object of the open air which carries so many associations with it. In the most intimate of all parting songs Burns makes the two friends recall with fervour how "we twa hae paddled in the burn, and pu'd the gowans fine." We would not give much for the schoolboy who had not spent whole days by the brook, and, indeed, one of the first objects of his curiosity is to know where it comes from. To trace its course backwards through the ploughland and pasture of a lowland county is one of the most delightful of childish adventures, and in the act of doing so many a fact of natural history is acquired that would not have otherwise been known. With the aid of a brook, especially if it be one with edges of rushes or tall flags, it is possible to approach the shyest of wild creatures. You have only to take off your boots and stockings, tuck up your trousers, and walk up the middle of the channel. The cover is perfect, and the water destroys the scent. In this



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HOME OF THE SPECKLED TROUT.

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way it is possible to stalk the creatures that come to the brook, and their name is legion, for the water-side holds attractions to creatures of every kind. The heron, so difficult to approach in the open, comes to the little sandy bays where shoals of minnows congregate, and, standing on one foot, watches a chance to impale his prey. The worst of it is that he is generally in the direct line of approach, and his keen eye soon apprises him of the strange object moving upward between the reedy margins of the rivulet. With one or two flaps of his wide long wings

he floats over the corner of the field to another fishing station. Yet he is not so wary but that the keen photographer may have a chance of getting him before he goes. Another bird that the writer observed closely from a brook is the raven. In a lonely valley through which trickled a small tributary of the Tweed a pair used to make their nest in days that are long gone by. The land is one of "fail dykes," as they are called, and the raven, exactly as described in the old ballad, used to come down and chatter there. It was very easy to imagine when two of them were together that they were holding deep discourse, their gestures were so solemn and



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TWINKLING AND SINGING.

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PASTURE AND FLOWLAND.

Copyright-

significant. In that neighbourhood there still are ravens, but they have changed their home, and now delight the owner of a grouse moor, who has shown them hospitality and forbids his keepers to interfere with their comfort. That, however, is in the far and mountainous North. In the flat Midlands, though one does not see ravens, one may find birds equally interesting.

The kingfisher has increased in numbers during the last ten or twenty years, and his fish-bone nest is no longer a rarity. The bird himself is not one of the shyest, and his exquisite plumage can never be seen to as much advantage as when he is perched, as he loves to be, on the rail of some hand-bridge across the brook. There, glancing up and down, he is on the

look-out for fish, and does not easily take alarm at the stealthy figure creeping up the bed of the stream. The dipper, in a sense, is even more interesting, as, though his colours have not the charm of the other, he flies from stone to stone, and wags his tail in the manner of his cousin, the wren, and his movements are ever as graceful as they are lively. During the summer it is very interesting to lie concealed and watch the little woodland songsters pay their visit to the water. The yellow-hammer, the linnets, and the finches alight at some pleasant shallow. They drink the cool waters with their bills, and then, as if not satisfied, step in and flutter their wings and splash it all over themselves, in evident enjoyment of the bath. Nor do they

seem to choose the place at random, because a moderate acquaintance with the stream reveals the fact that the little birds have their favourite spots. It is easy to fancy that some of them have grown weary of sitting on eggs, and while their mate is taking a turn, rejoice in a drink and a cool bath. The wood-pigeon and the larger birds have their places also. They do not remain long, but remind one of the old churchyard epitaph: "Some come for breakfast and away." Then, of course, there are hundreds of birds that actually nest close to the brook. Here the water-hen builds her home. On the bank you may seek not in vain for the water-wagtail's nest, and if there is a steep place it is possible that the sand-martin, which seems to have great difficulty in finding a proper site, has taken up his abode there. Even the thrush, though he usually nests in hedges and amid the small branches of trees, does not disdain the brookside, but in places where the roots of trees are laid bare by the floods of winter he finds a place side by side with the robin and the wren, birds that love the neighbourhood of the brook because, when the land is parched and dry, here they can still find insects and grubs.

And then the furred inhabitants of



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THE BIRDS' POOL.

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the field love the brookside also. The water-vole often has his burrow opening below the surface of the stream, so that he can dive and run in without ever coming to the top. It rises upward, and in a moment he is in a dry spot, probably with any amount of ventilation, because he loves to have several holes out of which he can bolt. His enemy, the weasel, though not particularly fond of water, often makes his home close to the brook, and it is curious to observe that only occasionally do these creatures come to loggerheads. Just as foxes, badgers, and rabbits all dwell in the same colony in peace, so do the weasel and the vole, but the truce is always in danger of being broken. One day the badger rises in a bad temper and slays the young foxes, or the young foxes playing among the rabbits suddenly discover that the latter are edible. It is the same with the weasel and the vole. When out fishing I have watched many a battle royal between them, though knowing all the time that for the greater part of the year they lived in amity. The weasel usually gets the better of the vole in such encounters, but I remember once seeing a battle with a far different result. An old grey rat encountered a weasel on the trunk of a decaying willow lying half over the water. They fought almost as long as Falstaff said he did at the battle of Shrewsbury, but in the end the rat got his fangs well set into the back of the weasel's neck and finished him. Such a result is very rare, for the weasel and the stoat are capable of holding their own at any time against creatures much beyond them in weight.

The fox is another animal given to frequenting the brook. He is extremely fond of water-birds, and prowls about in search of the moorhen, the coot, the mallard, and other aquatic birds. When tired he very often curls himself up among the rushes and goes softly to sleep, in this respect showing a great difference



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DOWN THE MEADOWS.

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in habit between himself and the badger, as the latter scarcely ever sleeps out. It is difficult to reason from effect to cause in the case of wild creatures, but in this instance a very plausible explanation could be offered. The nocturnal badger is in his habits cleanly to a degree, and his earth is always kept sweet. Probably he has been taught this from his habit of sitting within doors all day. If his earth were fouled it would not be possible to live in it without disease. The fox, on the other hand, takes no thought about sanitary arrangements, and his den is simply filthy. When it gets too bad for his nostrils, what he does is to change; and even a vixen with cubs is in the habit of removing from one home to another at frequent intervals. The fox



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WHERE THE BIRDS DRINK.

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probably knows that his home is not very attractive, and so he will go to sleep whenever he finds himself comfortable outside. He will climb a pollard and curl himself up in the crown of it. He will drop down among the rushes by the water-side, or fall asleep in growing crops, as if he looked upon a rest in the fields as a luxury and regarded his den only as a place of refuge.

These are the topics that suggest themselves to one's mind



W. A. J. Hensler.

A GLASSY POOL.

wandering by the brookside, yet every little stream has its own peculiar associations, and the thought and recollection of the writer can only suggest what is similar in the mind of the reader.

ON THE GREEN.

THERE is that about the medals given for the *News of the World* tournament, lately won by Braid at Sunningdale, that may raise a smile, even while the handsome designs will arouse a more respectful admiration, and an envy of the skill and prowess that won them. The medals bear the legend of the "Sunningdale Golf Club," with the arms—St. Andrew and his cross, a thistle, and all that is appropriate. On the obverse they are engraved with the name of the winner of each, Braid for the first, Ray for the second, and Taylor and Coburn for the semi-finalist's medals. "*News of the World* Tournament," "Professional Golfers' Association," and the date, appear on each. And on each is writ a motto. On Braid's first piece of plate is writ "Great things through greatest hazards are achieved." This is all right, though, perhaps, it is rather by the skilled avoidance of great hazards that golf medals are won. Ray is reminded that "'Tis sweet to think on what was hard to endure."

That may pass, although all the previous matches that he won perhaps are likely to leave a sweeter taste in Ray's mouth than the final which relegated to him this second medal. And George Coburn is well told that "Naught is impossible to him who strives." All this is excellent. But when we come to Taylor's medal we find it engraved with the very remarkable and portentous statement that "Your harvest is still in the blade." This really is terrible "news of the world" for golfers. If all that Taylor has achieved in golf already is only to be as the blade to the ear in comparison with what he is

fated to accomplish, why, all the rest of the golfers, including Harry Vardon himself, had better take to cricket, or literature, or some other refuge of the destitute. They can hardly have much of a show at golf. It has been suggested that the legend is to be read in another, less simple, sense, namely, that "Your harvest is still (*i.e.*, always) in the blade"—of your mashie. This, as a rendering, seems a little remote from probability; but it will be a consolation to the golfer who is appalled by the other and more obvious reading of the legend to learn that there is this possible alternative for his acceptance. It is more true of Taylor than of any other golfer that he has reaped a mighty fine harvest, and is able to reap it "still," as the motto says, with the blade of his mashie or any other of the iron clubs. But, in fine, these are handsome medals, worthy to commemorate the great competition for which they are awarded.

There is no doubt about Mr. "Johnny" Ball being all right again with his golf. He was not all right, either in his golf or in himself, at the amateur championship time. He was in a final tie with Mr. Graham for some tournament at Hoylake the other day, and beat him by three and one to play, although Mr. Graham was a hole up at the twelfth hole; and since that he has won a medal, also at Hoylake, in a fine score of 75, a score so fine that Mr. Hilton, who was second to him, was five strokes worse. The last time that Mr. Ball and Mr. Graham met in a match like the above the latter won.

The London Golf Company has a patent steel-faced club that it calls the "Cuirass." I have spoken of it before as embodying an idea that is in the general golfing mind just now, to the effect that the Haskell ball is likely to go better off a hard face, because, undoubtedly, it does go so much better than the "gutter" off iron clubs. Whether this steel face makes the ball go any further, I am in doubt, but a fact of which there can be no doubt is that the clubs, including the fitting in of the plate, are very well made and finished, and have, altogether, that feeling of "life" in the hand that is so unmistakable, and yet so impossible, to describe. The makers, too, seem to have a very fair idea of copying a club sent them as a pattern, and that is a rare faculty, according to the general experience of the golfer.

One of the consolations in writing about golf is the entertainment received from the comments of candid friends. Lately, in these notes, I suggested a probability that the longer driving of our Oxford and Cambridge Society's team in America than at home—a fact for which too many of them vouch for doubt to be possible—was due not so much to any peculiarity in the American air permitting the ball to travel through it more easily, as to the effect of the climate on the muscles of the drivers. "What rot!" was the criticism of one kind friend—and he was not a schoolboy—but he had no alternative explanation to offer; so, in spite of its terseness, this could not be called helpful. Another did a little better. He pointed out, having been a high jumper in his time, that there were days when he could jump inches higher than on other days. Yet he did not attribute this to any difference in the quality of the atmosphere, as being heavier and stiffer to jump through on one day than another. It was the propelling muscle that was sometimes stiffer. And if on certain days at home the same muscles can propel the body further in the air than on others, why may not the same muscles be able to propel the golf ball further in some climates than in others? This really does seem a helpful analogy. Whatever the reason be, there appears no doubt that, as Smollett (was it not Smollett?) said, "Our armies swore fearfully in the Low Countries," even so "Our golfers drove fearfully in the United States." There would seem a probability from Smollett's statement that climate has much influence on profanity; why not then also upon golf? For certainly there seems close association between the two.

A keen golfer of the old school and a distinguished Scottish peer has lately died at a great age, the late Earl of Stair. He must have been playing

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golf for very many years before there was any idea of the game being played in England anywhere except at Blackheath, and has seen all its strange changes and chances in the process of acclimatisation.

HORACE HUTCHINSON.

WILD COUNTRY LIFE.

THE DEADLY WIRE.

ASKED to name in one word that which is most destructive of wild life, and at the same time most inimical to sport, I should say "wire." In a hunting country the wire stretched along the top of a hedge—a deadly trap for horse and rider; in a coursing country, the almost equally dangerous barbed-wire fence; in a game-preserving country, the slender wire which the poacher's cunning fingers weave into so many fatal nooses for fur and feather; and in preserved waters, the various forms of wire contrivances for taking fish. This is a long list by itself. And, besides, there is the wire of the bird-catcher's traps, and the deadly noose, so often set in the eyrie of some fine and rare bird of prey, as well as the wire loops used at the end of poles to take sea-birds off their nesting rocks. Yet, after all this, the deadliest form of wire, where winged game and wild birds are concerned, has not been mentioned, namely, the telegraph wire, on which so many thousands of birds annually meet their death.

DESTRUCTION OF BIRD LIFE.

How deadly the telegraph wire is, especially in coastwise districts, where a single and almost invisible line runs low above the hedges towards some lonely coastguard station or isolated fishing village, may be discovered by anyone who, enquiring on the East Coast about rare migrants seen in the locality, will find that, perhaps, the larger number of birds mentioned were all "picked up under the wire." And the wire is not, like the human collector of rare birds, able to discriminate and choose its victims; so that the proportion of rare birds found in this way shows how immense must be the total of birds in general which are killed.

GAME BIRDS AND THE WIRE.

At a partridge-drive, where one stand was placed not far in front of such a wire, I have seen almost a second shower of birds falling behind the guns as the remnant of a scared pack swept down upon the unseen danger. One bird on that occasion struck the wire with such force that one wing was cut clean from the body, bird and wing falling several yards apart. Within a mile of the same spot a hen pheasant, coasting at immense speed from a wooded headland where the guns were at work, struck the wire midway between two posts with such momentum as to snap it like a thread of cotton. To guard against these accidents to game many landowners adopt the useful device of appending small labels to the telegraph wires at short distances. These do not interfere with the working of the telegraph, and they make the wire conspicuous to the birds, in fine weather at any rate.

MIXED VICTIMS.

No such device avails, however, in the dusk of evening or dawn, or in foggy weather, at which times the wire does its most deadly work; and there are occasions, during the season of autumn migration, when it is quite worth anyone's while on the East Coast to rise early, and be the first to walk along under the wire, gathering the victims. Here are illustrations of a woodcock and a snipe thus discovered; and it is especially among birds of swift and eccentric flight that damage is done. Almost always, too, you find them, as in these pictures, resting with wings half-spread upon the ground, too sorely hurt to do more than make frog-like leaps as you stoop to pick them up. Sometimes, on the other hand, they escape with a broken wing, and I have known a peewit, a moorhen, a starling, and a yellow-hammer, which all lived for many months, unable to fly, in the vicinity of the wire which maimed them. Sometimes I saw all four of them on the same afternoon, doing their best to get into hiding on my approach.

PROTECTIVE BIRD-LABELS.

Game birds, from their habit of low flight which just tops the hedges, are especially liable to accident, as are landrails and woodcock; but no class of bird escapes without paying toll of life to the wire. Skylarks are very



T. A. Metcalfe.

A DISABLED WOODCOCK.

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frequently killed in this way, as well as thrushes and greenfinches. Indeed, in the interest of bird-life generally, it might be worth while for the Selborne Society, or the Society for the Protection of Birds, to endeavour to take the matter up, and, in concert with landowners and the Government, endeavour to have all dangerous wires in country districts protected as far as possible by bird-labels.

THE WOOING PARTRIDGE.

Even if the poorness of the last breeding season for the partridges did not counsel moderation with the gun now, sportsmen would soon be forced to leave the birds alone out of sheer human sympathy, for their annual love-making has been in full swing for some time, and there is little sport in shooting birds who are so preoccupied with their own affairs that they almost seem more inclined to resent your intrusion upon them than to fly. On any morning since December 1st, in spite of occasional blizzards and frosts, you might hear the creaky challenges which the cock birds were flinging at each other, and you could hardly watch a party of the birds in any corner of a field for half a minute without seeing them break up into half-a-dozen separate fights. Not that the wooing fight of the partridge is ordinarily a very desperate matter. It is chiefly a question of lung power, first in throwing the highest note of defiance into that curious challenge which sounds like the shutting and opening of a rusty pair of shears, and, secondly, in sprinting across country, whether as pursuer or pursued does not seem to matter much.

THE ADVANTAGE OF DEFEAT.

Indeed, the partridge who runs away usually seems to have most of the fun. He does not run a foot further than the other pursues, and at once he throws up his head, inflates his chest, and follows the enemy back again with insulting challenges. When he is pursued again, he runs away again, and the fleeing bird always seems to have this advantage, that while he runs he keeps his eyes on the ground before him, and negotiates all inequalities without difficulty, whereas his pursuer, with his eyes fixed upon the hated figure in front, tumbles over all sorts of obstacles and into all kinds of ruts. In a ploughed field especially does this happen so frequently that the affair looks like the pursuit of a sound bird by a lame one, for the fugitive speeds evenly from ridge to ridge, while the pursuer steps short and stumbles at most of them. And on the top of all this aggravation to the better bird comes the certainty that when he has chased the other all over the field he will be followed all the way back by the other rascal, giving himself the airs of a conqueror. If partridges are peculiarly irritable at mating time, they have every excuse for it. This year, too, there seems to be more aggravation and quarrelling going on than usual, perhaps because the bad season told especially upon the young and the hen birds, so that there are now too many mature males. E. K. R.

O'ER FIELD AND FURROW.

THE week that has passed has been full of uneasiness. The dreaded frost has hovered over the land. Then it has melted into rain, and the ground has been more rotten and deeper than ever. The Bramham Moor added to the interest of the week's sport, which in their country has been good, by the desire of their followers to see what effect the cap would have. When it came to the point there was no one to cap. The undesirable strangers were not there. The fact is that, though I have heard a great deal about these people, I have seen very few of them; and unless a Hunt follows the example of one Midland pack and deliberately aims at the members of neighbouring Hunts, there are not really many people who are hit by the cap. In one respect the cap has certainly failed, and that is in making any material diminution in the size of the fields in some of the more fashionable countries. I say material



T. A. Metcalfe.

SNIPES HURT BY WIRE.

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diminution because fifty people more or less make very little difference in a big field. It may be old associations, but there always seems to me to be a peculiarly sporting and fox-hunting-like look about Lincolnshire, and when it is possible to do so, a visit to the Belvoir on that side of Grantham that is furthest from Melton is a great pleasure. The fields are moderate in size, and made up of those who belong to the county landowners and farmers, or those faithful visitors to Grantham that every year make their winter home in that pleasant and comfortable town. Sir Gilbert Greenall was once more in his place as Master, mounted on one of the famous Woolsthorpe hunters. It is a wonder how the stud groom keeps them so high in flesh in a season like the present, when the deep ground is all against the horses. The morning began badly. There was a chorus in Culverthorpe, a holloa and scramble for a start, a who-whoop over a drain, and all was over. The next covert was a wood, the name of which for the moment has escaped me. An old and stout fox, and a bold one, broke. The hounds were away over the fields towards Rauceby. Some days everything seems to go well, and with the pack on the right running well, every fence seemed to be hit off at a practicable point. If you are riding a young horse, and one new to the rather uncompromising ditches of Lincolnshire, this is a great point, as it gives the horse confidence and perhaps heartens the rider. Two coverts we passed, but hounds never went in; the fox had gone round them, the pack turning beautifully with the line, which was well held by the body of the pack.

You cannot well help losing time at a railway, and hounds were running

beech woods have an air of remoteness well suited to be the background to the chase. Like Lord Rothschild, Sir Robert prefers hounds bred and entered to the stag, and has already collected a very level, speedy pack. In wet weather hounds can run very fast over the Bucks side of their country, and, indeed, a well-bred and fast horse is a necessity, for the pace of staghounds is fast. Tuesday's stag, however, was not minded to go far afield, and gave a good hunting run, part of which was over a pleasant country. When once the stag is out of sight it is capital fun to see a pack of hounds work out his turns. I do not think Masters of Staghounds give their quarry quite so much law nowadays as they used to do, but still that may be fancy; at all events, this stag gave us two hours, and thus left off in plenty of time for me to catch a train from Wycombe. I was anxious to see the old country and its new Hunt, and the whole turn-out is workmanlike and sporting.

I always think that the only reason the Bicester country is reckoned among the provincial countries is that it lies so far from Melton. It is in every respect a glorious hunting ground, and might well be recommended as a place in which a beginner might serve his apprenticeship for the shires. A man who can ride to the Bicester hounds and hold a good place when they run is not likely to be far from any pack he hunts with, or stopped by any fences. Moreover, in the Bicester country he will certainly have to learn to face water. Brooks are notoriously found to stop men in Leicestershire who can be turned by nothing else. I have seen a very bold man in most runs cross a brook by a foot-plank, while his second horseman rode his horse over. I think, perhaps, the Grafton borderland is as fine a country as any in England, but it



W. A. Rouch.

ST. FRUSQUIN, THE WINNING SIRE OF THE YEAR.

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finely in covert when once more we reached them. They soon came out, crossing our front from left to right, running hard, yet hunting all the way—hunting because the scent was but moderate, driving because they were close to their fox. For once the railroad carried quite a scent, and hounds streamed along the line. The station at Ancaster turned the fox, and with but very little advantage he turned. Now in the repeated turns we could trace the plight of the hunted fox. He had to shake off the pack or die, and gained some distance by his clever tactics when he set his head for Syston Park. As soon, however, as he began to run at all straight, the Belvoir drive brought hounds on terms with him. Another sharp turn sent hounds over the scent, and when their huntsman helped them to hit off the line, the scent was a failing one and faded away altogether. We were surprised to find that we had been going for an hour and a quarter, every moment of which had been interesting. Once it seemed as though one of us would lose his place: A big ditch on the far side, a horse balanced on the edge, just giving time to the rider to slip off ere the steed slipped back into the depths below. Fortunately, a practicable place enabled him to scramble out, and very little time was lost. I noted, too, that gate-jumping was not quite a lost art in Lincolnshire.

In very early days the Queen's Staghounds were our delight as boys and girls; later I have hunted with them, and for one season lived within the limits of the Old Berkeley Hunt, over a great part of which the Royal Hunt come. Sir Robert Wilmot now hunts the country with great success, and still has the old familiar deer-cart which was presented to him. The staghounds are a most popular institution in Buckinghamshire, where the wild hills and the deep

is terribly stiff. It is a Bicester maxim that, owing to the depth of the soil, you should have a horse equal to at least a stone more than your riding weight, that is, if you mean to reach the end of the long runs the Bicester foxes, notably stout and wild, give you. It carried me back many years to find myself in the train from Oxford for Bicester, with a stout hireling at the end of the journey to look forward to, and the Northampton-hire country to ride over. I have noted that when one revisits the haunts of one's younger days everything seems smaller than of old. It was interesting to see whether this applied to the fences over which one used to ride. There were more people at the meet than there used to be, but fewer undergraduates; I am not sure there were any, save the two young relatives who were chaperoning me. The hounds looked well, and Cox, the hunt man—who is the son, I think, of an old friend—handled them well.

Once embarked on the run, with a horse ready, and even resolute, to take the responsibility, one was free to look at the pack. They hunted well, scarcely leaving the line, as they worked out what a glimpse of the fixture told me was a ring. Then, with added vemon and drive, they went on, checking for a moment by the Banbury and Buckingham branch line; Cox grasped the situation, and, casting over the line, they picked it up and ran prettily parallel to the railway and over the brook to Evenley. A beaten fox, an eager pack, a quiet huntsman, all seemed to combine for a kill, when a fresh fox sprang up, smooth, gay, and light, and hounds streaming away, we had a delightful scurry to Astwick, whence, as it was half back to Bicester, and the little horse had done a day's work, I decided to return. X.

THE HOME OF THE SKUAS.

IT is now several years since there appeared in some northern newspapers reports of the roughness of the inhabitants of Foula, but the reasons for the treatment the writer received were not equally in evidence. It subsequently transpired, however, that he and a companion had landed in order to shoot the great skua, or bonxie, as the natives call the bird. At the time only three pairs were nesting on the island, while the colony on Herma Ness in Unst, the one other breeding haunt of the bird in the United Kingdom, was in an equally precarious position. Shooting parties of the kind had been but too common, and the bonxie was threatened with extinction. On this occasion, however, the islanders were roused to action, the party were surrounded, the guns taken away, and the would-be destroyers marched ignominiously back to their boat. From that moment the bonxie became a sort of island possession, jealously guarded by the Foula men, and though one or two ne'er-do-wells, unable to resist the bribes of the professional dealer, occasionally take their eggs, the bonxie has increased to such an extent that on a recent visit to the island I found upwards of 200 pairs nesting on the hills. So much can local enthusiasm do where the arm of the law is powerless; and the example of the Foula men is one that might well be followed in the case of many another rare bird that is still struggling against unequal odds for mere existence.

The island of Foula rises in isolated grandeur sheer from the Atlantic, about a dozen miles from the nearest point on the mainland of Shetland, and nearly twenty from Walls, whither the mails are carried once a week in summer, fortnightly in winter. On a Monday morning a little "sixern" boat appears in the Voe, driven by a large lug, a foresail, and, perhaps, a mizen. Immediately the mind travels back over the centuries, for the boat is a model of the old Viking ships, and Viking blood still runs in the veins of its crew. The captain sits in the stern, his hand on the tiller, while his six rugged, weather-beaten men make ready for the landing. Presently the word is given, the sails are lowered, and in a few seconds the boat grates gently alongside the little quay.

Immediately all is bustle; the wind and tide are favourable for the return journey, and the men are eager not to miss the opportunity. If the wind backs into the south-west they may be kept prisoners at Walls for days together, and this happens too often for the crew to care to run any risks. The mails are

bearing silent testimony to the violence of the upheaval which gave the island birth. We must not dwell on the passage, however, romantic as it is. The tides flow with tremendous strength and swiftness, and the freshening breeze causes the waves to run uncomfortably high. From the hollows each sea looks like a mountain, certain to overwhelm the little undecked boat in a moment. The sail flaps limply, for all the wind is shut out by



A. J. R. Roberts. A HABIT OF TURNING HER BACK ON THE CAMERA. Copyright

the pile of water; but the boat is full of life, and rises over the crest of the billow as lightly as a seagull. Now and then, perhaps, a wave has an ugly curl, and a white crest gleams on the summit like the teeth of a dog whose lips are parted in a snarl. But the captain has seen it, the brown lug flutters down from the mast, boat meets sea stern on, and the danger is past.

Though Shetland is a land of natural harbours, Foula is badly served, and the boat has to run into a creek where a small stream empties itself into the sea. At the back of the harbour Hamnafeldt Hill rises abruptly more than 1,300ft., and the clouds that so often cling to its summit enhance the mystery with which a stranger instinctively invests the island. From the harbour, however, it is impossible to gain a correct impression of the topography of the place. Imagine an island, roughly pear-shaped, some three and a-quarter miles long, barely three miles wide, which can, nevertheless, boast three mountains, or rather one mountain with three distinct peaks, all over 1,200ft. high. Yet these hills rise so abruptly that their base is not co-extensive with the coast-line, and along the eastern side there is a strip of comparatively flat, low-lying land, gradually increasing in width as you follow it southwards until it includes the whole southern tail of the island. The west coast is a complete contrast, and the scenery is majestic beyond words, for here an immense rampart of rock defies the Atlantic, and makes its mightiest billows appear puny. From the summit of the cliffs the waves seem but ripples, and the thunder of the surf reaches the ear only as a murmur distinguishable now and then above the clamour of innumerable sea-birds. For almost a mile there is hardly a point at which this rampart is less than 700ft. high, while in the Kame, the highest cliff in Great Britain, it attains the incomprehensible height of 1,220ft. And it is to precipices such as these that the natives refer when they speak of the "banks."

All this and much besides is the island home of the skuas, and so completely do these birds seem to embody the spirit of their abode, that it is difficult to think of the one without the other. Yet Foula is, after all, only their breeding station, and the greater part of the year is spent in roaming the ocean, sometimes fishing for themselves, but, as a rule, living—like the pirates they are—on the proceeds

of their violence. A gull catches some fish—it may be a herring—but his prowess does not escape the watchful eye of the bonxie, who steels his wing and begins to rush down on his prey. Faster and faster he goes, till his pinions rattle, and the air roars as he devours the space that separates him from his victim. In vain the poor bird gulps down his catch and flies; the bonxie is on him. Dodge, double, and swerve as he



A. J. R. Roberts. AN EXTRAORDINARY CLUTCH.

carried out, the Foula bag is taken on board, provisions are bought, numbers of small commissions are executed, and at last everything is ready. The passenger for Foula takes his seat, the moorings are loosed, the sails set, and the boat glides down the sound towards the open sea. At the mouth of Vaila Sound Foula comes in sight, purple with distance, the fantastic contour of its hills, like mammoth teeth thrown up against the sky-line,

will, he cannot shake off his pursuer. The bonxie grows impatient, for the gulls do not often so dispute his sovereignty; he stoops, and passes with an ominous swish of wings a few inches above his victim's head. But the warning is unheeded, and, rising, the skua prepares for another swoop, this time striking the affrighted bird with his wing. It is enough; the gull pauses momentarily, and the disgorged fish falls shimmering towards the sea. The bully wheels in an instant, half closes his wings, and, stooping, overtakes and seizes his ill-gotten meal before it reaches the water.

It is obvious that a bird of such habits can best be studied at its breeding haunts, and both the species of skuas that breed in Britain nest on Foula. Roughly speaking, the Richardson's skua monopolises the low-lying and somewhat marshy parts of the island, while the great skua reigns supreme on the hills, 1,000ft. above the sea. There must, of course, be some exceptions to such an arbitrary division, but though the colonies of Richardson's skuas extend some distance up the hillsides, there is a very distinct belt of unoccupied ground—a sort of no man's land—between the haunts of the two species.

My first day on Foula was not the kind one would choose for field work, but I was anxious to lose no time, and putting on some oilskins, I defied the weather to do its worst. A gale of wind drove the rain in my face with almost blinding force whenever I tried to walk against it, and the ground was sodden under foot. Numbers of tiny streams rushed down from the hills, cutting channels in the peaty soil, and swamped the ground where a large number of allons, as the Foula folk call the Richardson's skuas, had their young ones. As is the case with all chicks that require a long period of incubation, the young allons arrive on the scene blessed with a well-developed pair of legs, and are able to run about a few hours after leaving the shell. And so many of the little, downy, blue-black creatures had wandered far from the spot where they first saw light, and were sheltering from the fury of the storm behind stones and hummocks of grass. For these I built little shelters of peat, but the parent birds mistook my attentions to their young, and stooped at me in the prettiest manner, striking me on the head with their wings. Despite the gale, they seemed quite at home in the air, and every movement was full of grace and ease. They stooped and soared and wheeled and stooped again, first one bird and then the other, till I ceased to flinch involuntarily as the swish of wings passed over my head. I only received the attentions of one pair of birds at a time, and the majority remained on the ground, standing with their heads pointing like weather-cocks towards the wind, and allowing me to approach them very closely. A few were sheltering their young beneath their wings, and some still had eggs. One or two I found with a small, jagged hole broken in the shell, whence the young bird had struggled in vain to escape; but, alas! the shell was at once its cradle and its

coffin. The depression in the ground that had served as a nest was transformed into a little pool, and the poor young allons had been drowned before they were born.

There are two races or varieties of Richardson's skuas, and not only were both represented in the colony I was visiting, but there was every intermediate step or gradation, from the darkest of the dark to the lightest of the light, and I found the two races interbreeding most freely. Dark males paired with light females, and dusky females with fair males. In size and shape there is nothing to choose between the two races. Both have the sharp, pointed wings and the elongated tail feathers, which distinguish them as a family from the great skuas. Both varieties have a black crown, but there the likeness ends. The dark race is almost uniformly dark brown, while the typically light species might be described as pied. Back, wings, and tail are slaty



A. J. R. Roberts.

YOUNG BONXIE AND A HERRING.

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brown, the cheeks whitish or pale straw-coloured, throat, breast, and under parts white, which colour often extends so as to form a collar round the neck.

It is difficult to account for the two races. The light variety does, indeed, extend farther north than the other, which seems to indicate that it shares the tendency of Arctic birds and animals to imitate their snowy surroundings; but, on the other hand, they are to be found equally far south. Some Foula folk imagine that the birds turn white as they grow older, but though many of the men are keen if unsystematic observers of Nature, I do not think that much reliance can be placed on this particular statement.

By the following day the gale had subsided, and the tops of the hills were once more visible, so I determined to try the and make a closer acquaintance with the bonxie. I had heard so much of the force of their blows, and had formed for myself no mean estimation of the prowess of the allon in this respect. If the bonxie can strike harder than the allon in proportion as he is larger, stronger, and heavier, surely his defence of his young must be something well worth the seeing. With thoughts such as these I set out with my camera to climb the hills. I had to pass

through another colony of Richardson's on the way, and from the distance their cries reminded me most forcibly of the mewling of cats. As I approached, some of the birds began to practise their arts of deception, and whenever I got near any young bird one of the parents would settle, crouch down and spread its wings, making believe it was sheltering its young. When that failed to turn me aside, the bird feigned a broken wing or some other disablement, but the skuas are not artists in deception like the plovers and some species of duck. The birds have but one other resource, and, rising from the ground, they try force where persuasion has failed. "Thwack" follows "thwack" in rapid succession, and doubtless the birds think they are succeeding at last, for I have determined to give the day to the bonxies, and soon the colony of mewling birds is left far below.

As I neared the bonxies' breeding haunts a thick wet mist suddenly blew up from the south-west, blotting out everything more than 15yds. or 20yds. distant. I went on, however, and soon got "warm," judging by the birds



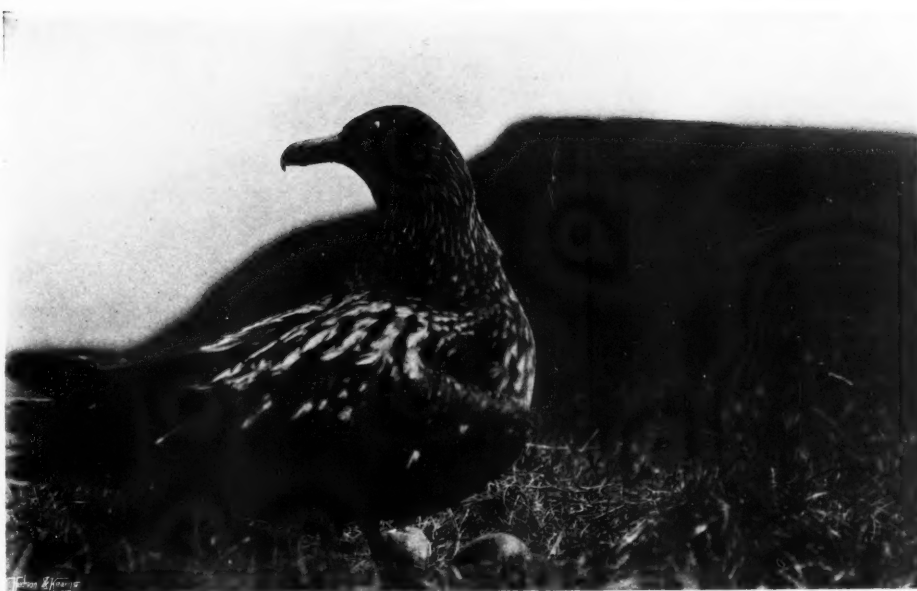
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SHELTERING FROM THE WIND.

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behaviour. Each pair of birds seemed to have a certain portion of ground especially their own, for directly I entered it they swooped down on me and escorted me with their somewhat embarrassing attentions till I reached the further border, when another pair carried on the work. Yet, despite all this, I was keenly disappointed in the bonxie, for during the six hours I spent on the hills he did not once actually touch me. I handled his young, and I handled his eggs, but still he did not strike. There was, however, something very majestic in the way he stooped and skimmed over my head. For a moment I might imagine myself to be the only living creature in my little circular world of 15yds. radius, save for an occasional hoarse cry, "Squa, squa," whence the skuas get their name. Then a bird would suddenly dispel my illusion, rushing down out of the mist, passing just over my head, and, altering the angle of his wings, would soar in an instant out of sight. When especially in earnest, he would drop his feet till they hung like paddles on either side of his tail, and as soon as he got within striking distance he would lower his body from the horizontal almost to the perpendicular. It was thus that he looked most terrifying, and thus that his image was photographed most clearly on my retina—a great expanse of wing, each feather standing away from its fellow, clear edged as a piece of tin, and bent with the pressure of the air; a heavy, thick-set body, piercing black eyes, and large black feet, webbed, yet possessing claws. I shut my eyes and can see him yet.

It did not take long to find a young bird—fat, yellow, and downy—hiding amongst the long coarse grass. The season had been a good one for the bonxies, and numbers of young were scattered over the hilltops. Those that had been hatched longest submitted to an examination more or less philosophically, but the impotent rage of the younger ones was most amusing. One little fellow, not more than a day old, was cheeping loudly in the nest when I found him, beside his brother, who was endeavouring to break forth from his shell. No sooner had I set



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GREAT SKUA ABOUT TO SIT.

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convenient position, and built a little turf hut for my camera some 4ft. away. It was during this process that my respect for the bonxie went up by leaps and bounds. The wind was blowing as I have seldom felt it blow before, and, knowing that if a bird should chance to knock off my cap I should most certainly lose it, I had placed it for safety in my pocket. As I worked away by the nest one of the birds stooped and touched me lightly on the head. I stopped and turned to look up at the bird which had been the first to strike me, but ere I was aware of it the bird dashed down again and gave me a stinging blow on the temple with its wing. During the remainder of my stay at Foula I was struck by many another bird, but by none with such zest and force as by the bird which could not understand my miniature earthworks by his nest.

I allowed two or three days to elapse, so that the birds might get accustomed to the little hut, and then started out one fine bright morning with my camera and one of my newly-made Foula friends, a true lover of Nature.

Soon the camera was focussed, the shutter set, and a long string attached to the release. I then hid in a water-course some 200yds. away, quite out of sight of the nest over the brow of the hill, and my companion went to the summit of another hill which commanded a view both of the bird and myself. There he lay and watched the bird through my field-glasses and signalled to me when the bird was comfortably settled on her eggs. All that remained to be done was to pull the string, and in this way I obtained several pictures of the bird, many of which would have been better but for the bird's unfortunate habit of turning her back on the camera.

When my companion rejoined me, he said, "Aye, but the bonxie is a wise bird! She bit and pulled at the hut all round to make sure it was harmless before she would sit down." The bonxie may be wise—and, indeed, what bird is not?—but it cannot be denied that "he is a bit of a corbie" (raven), as my

friend remarked. We have already alluded to his robberies on the high seas, but that that is not his worst crime the numerous corpses of puffins, which lay near the different nests in various degrees of consumption, testified, and my friend told me he had seen a bonxie kill a herring gull as it sat harmlessly on the water, apparently for the mere wanton pleasure of destruction. Yet one never saw the great skua carrying his prey to his nest. The Foula folk say that he carries the herrings in his throat and then brings them up again for his young ones. This I believe to be true from my own observations, but it is surely impossible for him to treat a puffin in the same way.

The usual number of eggs for both bonxie and allon is two, but I was fortunate enough to see a nest of the latter species which contained four eggs—a thing apparently unprecedented on Foula. A shepherd, who knew every stock and stone of that part of the island, told me that for



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RICHARDSON'S SKUA ON NEST.

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up my camera, however, than he stumbled towards it, and tore impartially at the legs or at the grass, and bit at my hand when I tried to persuade him to return to his nest and stay there. Even for a young bird he was an exceptionally bad "sitter," and owing to the poor light a time exposure was necessary.

It was, of course, impossible to attempt to take the old bonxies on such a miserable day, but I saw enough of their habits to show me how it could be done. They are in some respects foolish birds, and combine, in a greater degree than most, extreme boldness with timidity. Nothing will persuade a bird to sit on its eggs when you are in sight. You may have handled its eggs, and the bird may have struck you while doing so, but, though you retire 200yds. or more and lie down, she will not return to her eggs for fear of betraying them. That, at least, was my experience.

The next time I went to the hills I sought out a nest in a

the past two years he had found a nest with three eggs in much the same spot. The news travelled round the island, as only gossip can, and one man said to me, as if he had reached the height of humour, "What a joke 'twould be if they all hatched!" Whether they all did or not I cannot say, for my visit came to an end all too soon. One bird, however, hatched two days before I left—a small weakly little thing which died the next day—and two of the other eggs were "chipping." The mother of this remarkable clutch—for I do not think that in this case the eggs were the production of more than one bird—figures in one of the illustrations.

Time, so far from waiting for me or any man, seemed to run on with winged feet. Each day passed more quickly than its predecessor, and on a Tuesday morning, just a fortnight after my arrival, I was again sitting in the little Viking boat, whose sails were shaken out to a stiffish breeze.

A. J. R. ROBERTS.

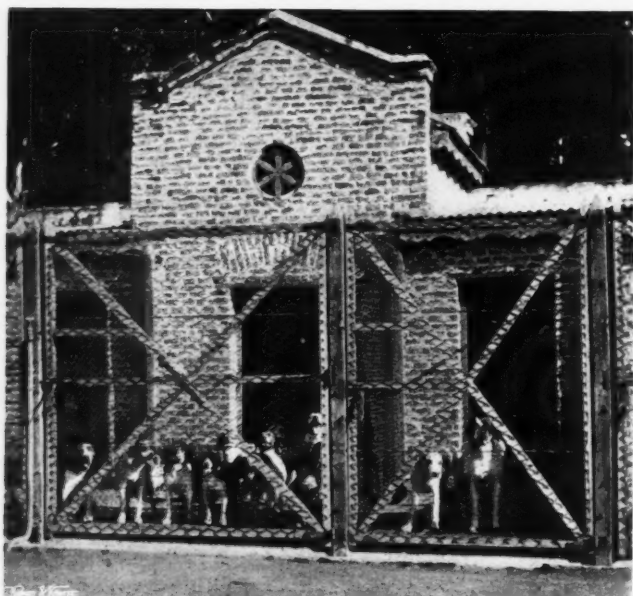
HUNTING IN THE ARGENTINE.

WHEN I visited the Argentine Republic I was fortunate to meet a certain gentleman who was a native of the country. Having spent his youth in England, he had

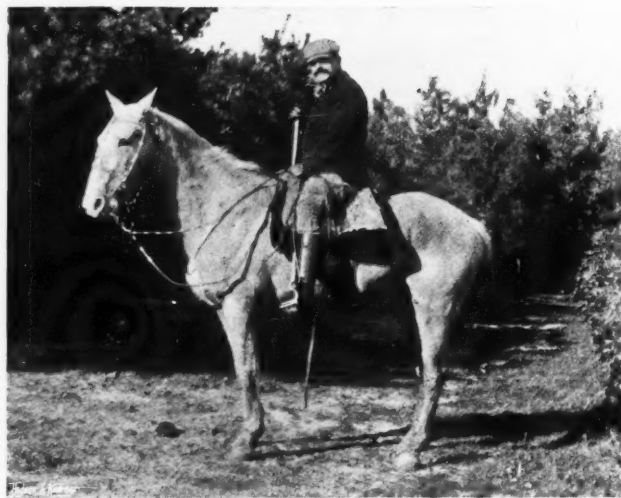
learned to love many of our favourite sports and pastimes, and more especially those necessitating the co-operation of the horse. In Buenos Ayres, I suppose, racing is as good as anywhere in the world, and of course polo is regularly played in many parts of the Republic; but, unhappily, those wishing to indulge in hunting, in its legitimate form, have little opportunity of so doing. Certainly there is an excellent pack of drag-hounds at Hurlingham (a sporting club in the suburbs of the city), and with them I have enjoyed several very pleasant runs, but, all the same, it cannot be denied that following a drag is a poor substitute for the real thing—it lacks all the art, all the romance, of true hunting. And so, feeling this deficiency, my friend established upon his own *estancia* a small pack of harriers, which he



THE CORRECT HUNTING COSTUME FOR SOUTH AMERICA.



THE KENNELS.



AN ARGENTINE HUNTER.

formed from the drafts of various English kennels. Altogether it was a most praiseworthy achievement, for not only had he to

import the hounds, but he had also to introduce the game for them to hunt. But this part he was able to do without much difficulty. Some ten or a dozen years ago hares were brought into the Argentine from Europe and liberated near Rosario, where they soon increased extensively, and from this district he was therefore able to procure as many as he desired. But these hares—which he released near the kennels—did not like being hunted, and, having an almost illimitable plain over which to roam, they soon became dispersed and difficult to find. Doubtless many were also killed upon the neighbouring estates, for a strange animal would be likely to receive little hospitality

from the hands of a gaucho. In consequence, the hounds occasionally had a day upon which their rightful quarry was not forthcoming; but as they were always eager to hunt anything that their Master permitted, they could repeatedly show sport of a kind, and sometimes, indeed, it was very good.

The Master, who meritoriously hunted the hounds himself, formed a very imposing figure upon his cream-coloured horse. Like many of his compatriots, he was fond of silver ornamentation, and his bridle, stirrups, and other fittings were of that metal, while his native saddle—or, more correctly, *recado*—had strappings of some especially expensive material. When I was staying with him during the month of July—which, of course, is the Southern mid-winter—I was nearly always out with his little pack, and had every opportunity of watching them at work, and once or twice in his absence I was allowed to hunt them myself, which was an honour I greatly appreciated.

It is always a delight to see hounds turn easily to the voice of their huntsman, and in this lay one of their chief charms. I mainly attribute this wonderful obedience to the unprotected nature of the ground, which made it comparatively easy to correct any perverse individual of the pack. In a wooded country it is often difficult to administer the required punishment. But, what was really more to the point, the hounds were very fast. The old turf of the pampa carried an exceptional scent, and as there was absolutely nothing to hinder them, they could drive along at very good speed, and frequently, in attempting to keep up with them, the stamina of the little grass-fed ponies was severely tried.

As I have previously hinted, the object of the chase was not always of importance, and sometimes we would get on a strange line and have a great run after an entirely unknown animal—

perhaps we would be following the nocturnal wanderings of a grey pampa fox, or, again, perhaps those of an otter along the banks of some small stream—it really mattered little, so long as we had a good gallop.

The large number of vizcacha holes spoilt our sport to a certain extent, and only once did we get on close terms with any of these chance creatures. That morning we were out early. When first we left the *estancia* the sun was still shining low over the vast ocean of grass, and the white, powdered frost yet remained upon the ground. The scene was typical of the Argentine. There was the open, everlasting pampa lying in gently undulating slopes as far as the eye could reach, and unbroken in its nakedness save for a few small, swampy lagoons, one or two clumps of eucalyptus planted round a shepherd's cottage, and the long lines of wire dividing the country into large *potreros*, or enclosures.

At the start the hounds were rather high-spirited and somewhat too free with their tongue, but, eventually, they spoke in a more earnest tone, and after running one way and then the other, they settled to work with a good will. It was surprising to see how swiftly they could travel—it seemed almost as if they were running in view. Each hound went as fast as it was individually capable, and, in consequence, there was considerable diversity of speed. Some of the more obese members of the pack apparently

suffered from shortness of breath, but notwithstanding this, they made very good time. As regards speed, I really fancy they would not have compared unfavourably with even the best Midland packs, for, it must be remembered, they had no fences to stop them, and no large field to thunder behind and drive them over the line. There was never such a thing as "Hounds, please, gentlemen—hounds!"; you could go when and where you chose. In the open, of course, it was not much trouble to keep in touch with the pack, but the wire fences occasionally delayed us—for we could only cut the strands at certain places—and they would then get a lead, and afterwards need a lot of catching. But at length, after a long run, and coming to a portion of the ground densely overgrown by the huge cardoon thistles, a check of some moment occurred, and the hounds grew doubtful of the line. But just as the Master was about to call them off, he caught sight of a figure slinking through the grey-blue leaves, and was in time to see a light-furred animal disappear into the old hole of a vizcacha. We cheered the hounds at the mouth of the earth, but the day was by now advanced, and we did not wait to give them the blood they so richly deserved. In England we are lucky in having a more or less bold fox. This Patagonian species, which, scientifically, does not belong to the true foxes, is practically useless for hunting purposes.

COLLINGWOOD INGRAM.

A LEGACY OF THE ICE AGE.

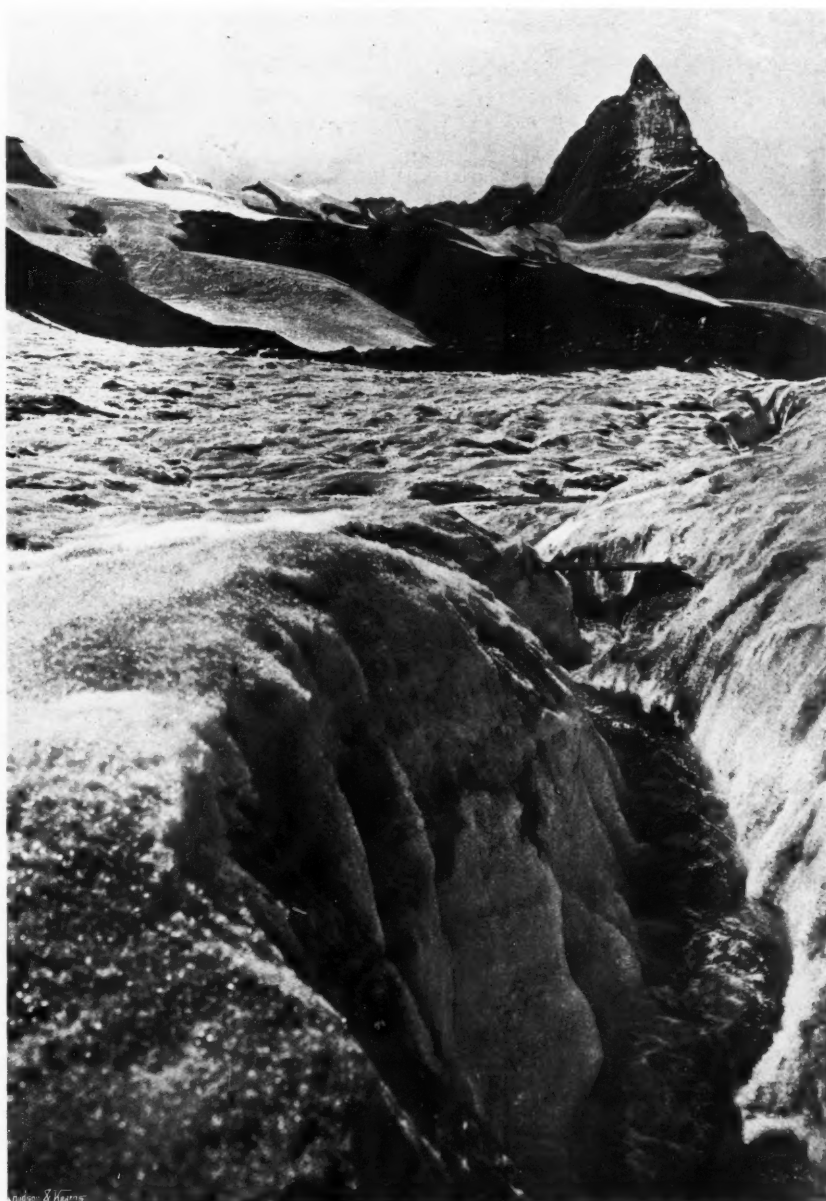
NOT long ago I took a friend on a glacier for the first time. Before we had gone far she remarked to me, gazing round at the many peculiarities it presented, that it was quite remarkably like the photographs she had seen! I suppose I looked a little surprised, for she added, "Many things are not at all what photographs lead one to expect; but a glacier is so exactly like the pictures of those that I have seen during your Alpine lectures, that I can't help feeling as if I had already been on one!"

It occurred to me, when pondering over my friend's remark, that an attempt to illustrate, by camera and pen, the chief features of one of these legacies of an ice age might not be without interest; so during the past summer I often made excursions to the glaciers near Zermatt, for the express purpose of photographing their various characteristics.

I suppose that the first impression an Alpine glacier makes on the traveller is that it is excessively dirty. He usually begins by seeing the lower end, or snout, of an ice-stream, and it is just here that it looks its very worst. The stones and earth which have been washed down by storms from the adjacent mountain-sides, perhaps several miles higher up its course, accumulate in large quantities at its termination. For the glacier has shrunk and narrowed, and not only brought its various banks of *débris*, or moraines, close together, but has also exposed on its surface the boulders and rubbish it swallowed in its crevasses at an earlier stage of its journey. The steeper and more crevassed the glacier, the cleaner will it be, and the more unbroken and level the surface at the end, the more will it be buried beneath the burdens it has carried along with it. Should the rocks in the neighbourhood be of a very loose and friable nature, the quantity of material falling from them will, of course, be great.

It will soon be noticed that some of the larger rocks, which rest on the surface of the ice, are more rounded, polished, and scratched—or striated—than others. The reason is obvious. They have travelled for a long distance within the glacier, whereas the others have more recently tumbled down from the hillsides, and have kept their position outside the ice. These boulders are one of the most interesting features of a glacier, for it is by their aid, better than by any other means, that we can trace the path of prehistoric ice-streams. We find these erratics, as they are called, in all sorts of unexpected places, and should find many more had they not, for years past, been broken up for road-making and building purposes. We find them in Wales, of rock which is found *in situ* not nearer than Scotland. We find them perched on the slopes of the Jura, of granite, which must have been borne on a glacier from

Mont Blanc. The traveller on his journey by train to the Gorner Grät will notice many specimens on the bare, rocky ground near the top. Everywhere they have the appearance of being stranded, and are often poised in extremely insecure positions.



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GLACIER STREAM ON THE PLATEAU OF GORNER GLACIER.



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AN ERRATIC DROPPED BY AN ANCIENT GLACIER.

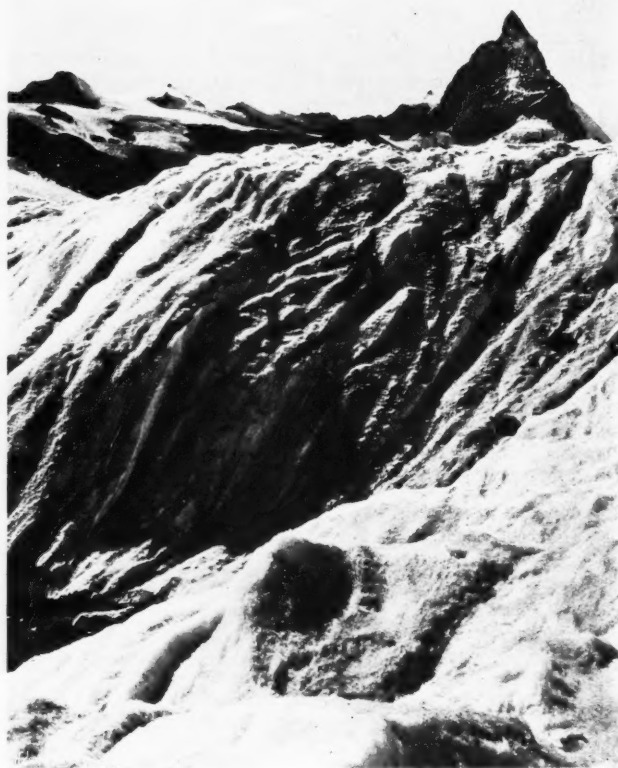
As the higher reaches (if I may so describe them) of the glacier are gained its beauty increases. The ice, becoming whiter and purer the farther one goes, is seamed by gaily-running streams, which sparkle in the sun between their sapphire banks. From time to time a sound as of thunder calls the traveller aside to explore its source. He finds a shaft into the blue-black depth of which a waterfall is pouring with deafening roar, and if he throws down a stone it will be long before it touches anything. These moulins, or glacier mills, are sometimes of enormous depth, and the water, falling from so great a height on to the rock beneath, wears a hole in it. Stones are washed into this hole, and being worked round and round by the water, wear deep pits, of which those in the glacier garden at Lucerne are excellent specimens. A moulin is first formed by a stream finding a crevasse in its course. Into this it plunges, and then it only remains for the falling water to pierce a shaft immediately below it.

It is amongst the séracs of a glacier that the scenes of wildest beauty are met with. The ice, in its downward flow, has come to a steep drop in its bed. Over this it plunges, the surface cracked and riven by the strain of the bending mass, and torn apart till it forms towers and mighty cubes, separated from each other by profound fissures or crevasses. Sometimes the precipice is too high and steep for the glacier to hold together on its downward path; it then forms a great cliff of ice, from which, from time to time, great slices weighing many tons break off, and are shattered to powder beneath. No one of his free will would pass beneath such a place.

Now and then on one of the upper plateaux of a glacier,

but below the snow-line, and usually adjacent to a moraine, we find charming little lakes, which reflect in their mirror-like surface the neighbouring peaks. Tiny pools are also frequently met with, and during cold nights a thin film of ice forms over them. The next day the ice melts on the sunny side, and some of the water evaporates. Next night, perhaps, it freezes over again, and the following day the same melting and the same evaporation of water take place, so that we sometimes find half-a-dozen or more thin films of ice, perhaps half an inch apart, one above another, on the shady side of these pools, giving quite a fairy-like effect.

The moraines, or accumulations of rubbish which have fallen from the rocky slopes bordering the glaciers, streak the ice with their trail of stones and gravel. When two glaciers join, their



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SHOWING THE ROUGH TEXTURE OF GLACIER ICE.

sides or lateral moraines unite and form a medial moraine, so that in the case of extensive ice-streams such as the Gorner or the Mer de Glace, several moraines in parallel lines will be noticed.

A medial moraine rises to a ridge in its centre where the *débris* is thickest, the underlying ice being protected by it from the sun, and therefore remaining unmelted, while that which is exposed continues to sink.

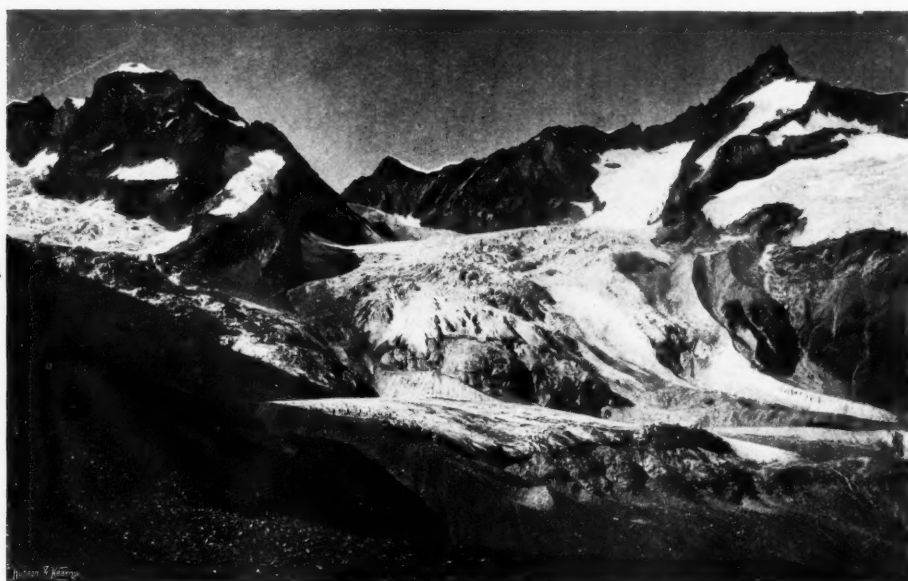
It is for the same reason that large boulders resting on the ice, and acting as sunshades, are found after a time with a pedestal of ice beneath them, and have thus been named glacier tables. Heaps of sand produce the same result, and the sharply-pointed sand cones, which are really ridges of ice but lightly covered with sand, are objects too curious to be overlooked, and are due to a similar cause.



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AN ERRATIC STRANDED ON A GLACIER.

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Mrs. A. Le Blond. A GENERAL VIEW OF SOME GLACIERS.

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So long as we restrict our walk to the dry glacier, where no snow lies, our safety is easily secured by the obvious precaution of avoiding slippery and precipitous spots whence we may tumble into crevasses; but as soon as snow covers the surface we need the precaution of a rope and the help of someone of experience in guiding the party. The scope of this little paper, however, does not extend above the snow-line.

IN THE GARDEN.

A BEAUTIFUL ROSE IN WINTER FOR ITS BARK.

A WELL-KNOWN amateur grower of Roses writes: "This is one of those plants which, like the Dogwood, Cardinal Willow, *Stephandra flexuosa*, etc., provide us, by means of their brightly-tinted bark, with a cheerful bit of colour throughout the winter months. Coming, as it does, from the Alps and Pyrenees, it is especially fitted for grouping on rough banks and in exposed positions, in or near the rock garden. Visitors to the Bath Botanic Garden may have noticed how picturesque this species is growing out from some large boulders of oolite stone. One of these plants appears to have sown itself in quite a small hole in the rock, and its roots have penetrated into the soil beneath. During the past ten years this plant has grown considerably; the base of the stem has quite filled up the hole, and, as it became compressed, gradually formed a small hole upon the surface of the rock. As a hedge this variety is truly delightful, while its beautiful glaucous, reddish-purple leaves and its coloured stems are useful to intersperse with cut Roses, on which account alone it should find a place in every Rose Garden. Although the flowers are of no importance, its brownish-red hips are pretty, and from these it may be easily raised from seed. It also strikes freely, and should never be grafted. How is it that raisers have not crossed this species with the Teas and given us quite a new race of Roses? A cross between this Rose and *Rosa wichuraiana* might be productive of a race combining the purplish tone of its foliage with the glossy leaves and prostrate growth of the other. The hybridisation of many of these wild Roses scarcely seems to have been attempted as yet, and if raisers can give us such superb Roses as *Una*, which had for one of its parents the common Dog Rose, surely we cannot tell what may be in store for us when experiments are made with other kinds. At any rate, I commend *Rosa rubrifolia*—which is also sometimes known as *R. ferruginea* and *R. rubicunda*—to the notice of hybridists, in the hope that they may increase the substance and size of its flowers without losing its tinted stems and leaves."

BUSH IVIES FROM HANDSWORTH.

We wrote recently in praise of the Bush Ivies, and a boxful of shoots from Messrs. Fisher, Son, and Sibray of Handsworth, near Sheffield, serves as a reminder of the many varieties in good leaf colourings that are available for those who are wise enough to plant these beautiful evergreens in their gardens. The sorts sent were *Palmata aurea*, which has rather narrow leaves splashed with rich yellow, a bright distinct Ivy, dense in growth without being

too much so; *purpurea*, which has a large glossy green leaf, and is one of the most handsome of the Bush Ivies; the yellow-berried bush variety, which makes so excellent a change from the red-fruited variety; the gold blotched *Amurensis*, a noble variety, the leaves of immense size and dark green, with quite a purplish marking—it is very strong, and a variety for bold effect; and the Irish, which is of a cheery green colour, and very refined to look at, a Bush Ivy of the greatest value in the garden.

RANDOM NOTES.

Own Root Roses.—We have received the following interesting notes from a reader, and we hope others will follow this excellent example: "In COUNTRY LIFE of August 9th, 1902, you wrote on this subject, and said you would like to get notes thereon from successful growers. I began putting down Rose cuttings in the open in October and November, 1900, and have continued doing so each succeeding autumn. Those which have grown strongest and flowered most with me are Cheshunt Hybrid, Reine Olga de Wurtemberg, Céline Forestier, Mme. Charles, Marie Van Houtte, Clio, Mme. A. Carrière, Souv. de la Malmaison, Gloire de Dijon, etc. The latter is popularly supposed to refuse to grow from cuttings; can any of your readers endorse this? I put good long cuttings of strong wood in a bed of loam

and leaf-mould, surrounding each with a little bed of sand, and plant very firmly, leaving a good many leaves on. They suffer in spring from parching winds, and should then be kept moist. I have also grown several in glass jars of water, a little sand, and lump of charcoal, keeping the jars filled up with rain-water, but never changing it. At present—October 28th—blooming side by side in my Rose garden, are two Malmaison Rose bushes, one water grown, one earth. The latter, three years old, has sixty-six splendid buds doing their best to expand, though drenched daily with torrential rains. The plant is a marvel of beauty and health. The other, water grown, two years old, is also very full of buds—both second bloom, of course. All the Roses I have named have done excellently, but I mention the Malmaisons in particular as, being heavy Roses, it is interesting to watch their fight with the elements.

Water Plants in Winter.—It is a mistake to break the ice over water plants under the impression that relief from the solid covering is necessary; it is nothing of the kind, but really a protection. One of our best authorities on this question regards breaking of the ice as quite unnecessary, as the plants are more or less dormant at this season of the year. Even Arum Lilies, which in the West generally get cut down by frost below the water-line, are none the worse for it, but make new shoots the following year, as if nothing had happened. Much coddling and covering of rock plants generally is a mistake, as frequently mice or other vermin seek shelter under such covering, and probably inflict more damage on the plants than the frost.

The Creeping Willow.—Probably only those who are learned in trees and shrubs know the beautiful prostrate Willow known as *Salix repens* var. *argentea* and *S. sericea*. Mr. Bean, the sub-curator of the Royal Gardens, Kew, mentions in a note that there are at least three different species of Willow that have been called "sericea," but the name has been most frequently given to a silver-leaved variety of the British prostrate Willow (*S. repens*); its correct name is *S. repens* var. *argentea*. As a shrub for water-side, or where a Willow group near the ground is wished for, this variety should be made a note of; the leaves are half an inch to an inch long, and the under-surface is covered with silvery, silky hairs, which glisten in the wind.



Mrs. A. Le Blond. ICE AGE: A LAKE ON A GLACIER.

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THE gardens we depict have a style and a beauty that are almost their own. They are invested with the stately manner, which bears some relationship to the sober magnificence of Le Nôtre. There are the still waters, the long canal, the dense masses of trees, which we associate with the great French master. We would not, however, suggest that the celebrated gardens of Bicton are anything but English essentially. They have kinship with the noble features of the grounds at Melbourne in Derbyshire and other fine examples. In them is a delightful charm and repose, which the illustrations suggest, though they cannot delineate every beauty. Flowers are not banished from Bicton, but in the more stately parts of the gardens they have no place. Dependence has been set upon the varying effects of the moving sun, giving changing aspects to the enchanted realm the whole day long.

These gardens have the advantage of lying in a very beautiful part of England, about midway between Sidmouth and Exmouth in South Devon, and some three miles upward from the mouth of the lovely river Otter. That stream rises in the Black Down Hills, and pursues its course through a pastoral valley between heights crested with woods, and often dotted with sheep on the slopes, while the red cattle of Devon stand up to their hocks in the sweet pasture of the river-side meadows. Otterton, the close neighbour of Bicton, is the first village up from the sea, and is a picturesque and quaint place, with "cob" cottages, built of a mixture of clay and straw, which shows red where the

plaster has peeled away, and with a red tower for its church, contrasting with the grey limestone of the sacred edifice, which was rebuilt by the late Lady Rolle. The warm tint of the red soil gives unusual richness of colour to this part of Devonshire, and there are few prettier villages than Otterton.

Beyond the bridge which spans the translucent stream is a path leading to Bicton, which lies half a mile away, and has a church built in 1850 by Lady Rolle to replace a venerable structure then crumbling to decay. Some part of it was retained and converted into a family mausoleum, connected by a cloister with the ancient tower. The group of buildings is separated by a light railing of iron from the enchanting gardens of Bicton House, which present ravishing pictures from the churchyard. Here in the times of the Conqueror, or not long after, was seated one William Porto, who has been spoken of by the name of Janitor. After him came the families of Arbalister, or Balistarius, of Sachvill, and of Copleston. The last of the Coplestons of Bicton sold the estate to Sir Robert Dennis, or Denys, who built the old house there anew, made it his principal residence, and formed a park for deer, adding "diverse commodities and pleasancess thereunto," as is recorded in the notes of Sir William Pole, who relates that the builder's son, Sir Thomas Dennis, did the like. The knight's daughter, Ann, married Sir Henry Rolle, the younger, and carried the estate into that notable family.

The Rolles are descended from George Rolle of London, who bought the Stevenstone Estate near Great Torrington in





THE SHEPHERDESS.

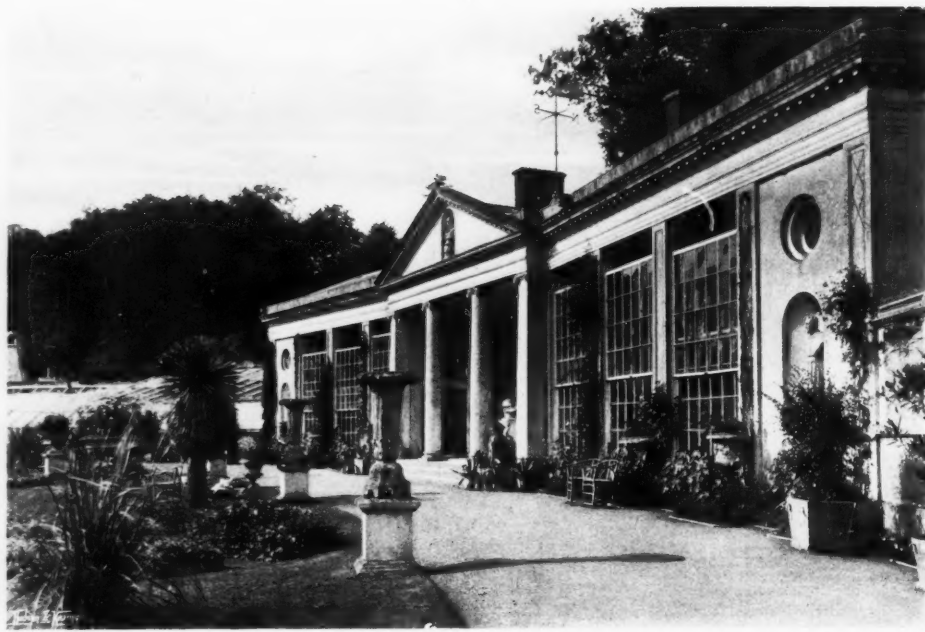
"COUNTRY LIFE."

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North Devon early in the time of Henry VIII. His descendants flourished, and increased their possessions by fortunate marriages. Robert Rolle, a moderate Parliamentarian, married Lady Arabella Clinton, and that barony became vested in his granddaughter, Margaret Rolle, Baroness Clinton, who married Lord Walpole, eldest son of the first Earl of Oxford, and is frequently mentioned in Horace Walpole's letters, not greatly to her advantage. Of this family was Sir Henry

Rolle, who was called to the Bar, practised with eminent success in the King's Bench, was urgent in the impeachment of Buckingham, resolutely declined supply until grievances had been redressed, took the covenant, and was awarded a judgeship in the King's Bench. The judge's brother, John, was also a notable politician, as well as a merchant, and took a resolute stand upon the question of tonnage and poundage.

The great-grandson of George Rolle, who first established himself in Devonshire, was the Sir Henry Rolle who came into possession of Bicton by his marriage with the daughter of Sir Thomas Dennis. His eldest son was Henry Rolle, who succeeded his father in 1730, was M.P. for Devon and Barnstaple until 1748, and was then created Lord Rolle of Stevenstone. This peer was never married, and was succeeded in his estates at Bicton by his brother John, who demolished the old mansion, intending to build a magnificent house in its place. He died, however, before much had been done, and the work was carried on by his brother, Dennis Rolle, who had not



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THE ORANGERY.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

completed it much before the end of the eighteenth century. This Dennis is described in that curious book, "The Worthies of Devon," by John Prince, as having been "the darling of his country in his time, adorned with all the desirable qualities that make a complete gentleman." "As his life was the delight and comfort, so his death was the grief and lamentation, of all who knew him. He was, what most of all endears greatness, of great courtesy and condescension even to his

inferiors. His neighbours found him open-handed and liberal as a benefactor, and his generosity was remembered."

His son, John, was created Lord Rolle, bearing the same title as his uncle, in 1797, and lived until 1842. For many years he represented Devon in Parliament, and was a busy politician and a zealous supporter of Pitt. In 1783 he opposed Foxe's India Bill, apparently with some levity, and acquired fame by his name being used in the "Rolliad," as a peg for a general satire of the Tory Party, though the chief purpose was to attack Pitt and Dundas. On the title-page of the pamphlet there is a humorous achievement of arms for the popular landowner of Devon: "On a field argent, three French rolls, or, between two rolls of parchment, proper, placed chevron-wise; crest—a half length figure of the Master of the Rolls, like a demi-lion rampant, with a roll of parchment between his paws, and the motto 'Jouez bien votre rôle.'"

"O'er rolls of parchment antiquarians pore;
Thy mind, O Rolle, afford a richer store!"



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A VISTA FROM THE LAWN.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



THE LADY AND HER BEAU.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

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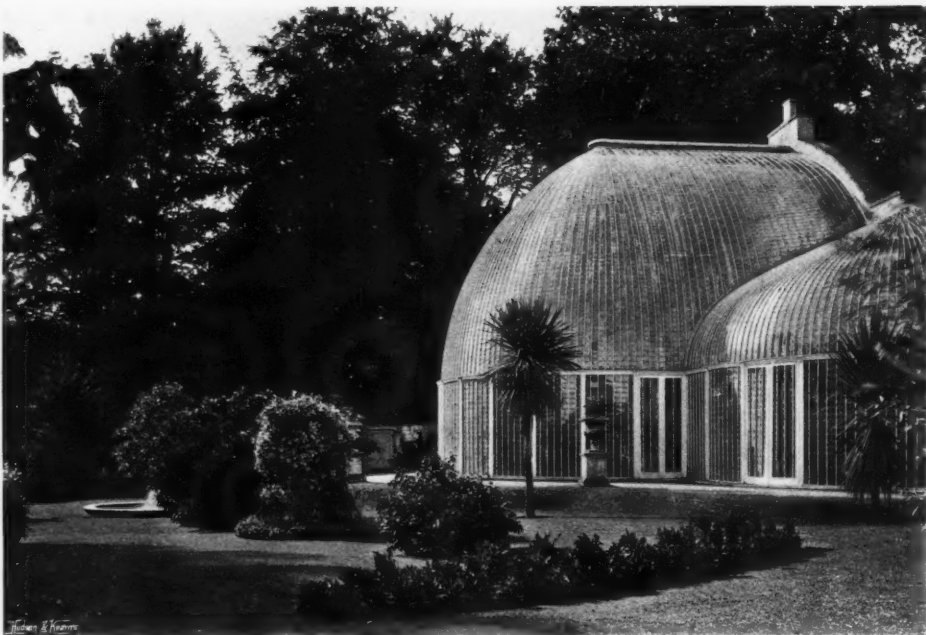
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THE CENTRE LAWN.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

Lord Rolle lived to the age of eighty-six, and, having been a liberal landlord and a true friend to many, his loss was greatly deplored. In his time a great many improvements were effected at Bicton, and the work has been carried on by his successors with enlightened taste and judgment. His widow, who raised the new church at Bicton in his memory, died at Bicton in 1885, at the advanced age of eighty-eight. She left all her real estate, and a large sum of money, to her nephew, Walter Randolph Trefusis, who survived her only a few days, when Bicton came to its present possessor, who adopted the name of Rolle instead of his patronymic of Trefusis. The estates consisted in 1883 of 55,592 acres in Devon, worth annually £47,170, while in 1797 the rent roll is said to have been £40,000.

Mr. Rolle has done much to improve and beautify his charming estate, and has enriched it in many ways. Our illustrations show much of its sober stateliness, and will suggest to our readers its enchanting character. We give a picture of the orangery, with its Ionic pillars. From that point a lovely emerald lawn slopes to another terrace, whence there is a descent by two flights of rather steep steps to the lower lawn, which is beautifully hedged, flanked by glorious trees, and adorned with delightful "amorini," standing upon pedestals, and with a very unusual vase supported by three cherubs. It is a region of delights, sequestered and beautiful, but there is a further descent to the lake, or rectangular water, which is seen in several of our illustrations.



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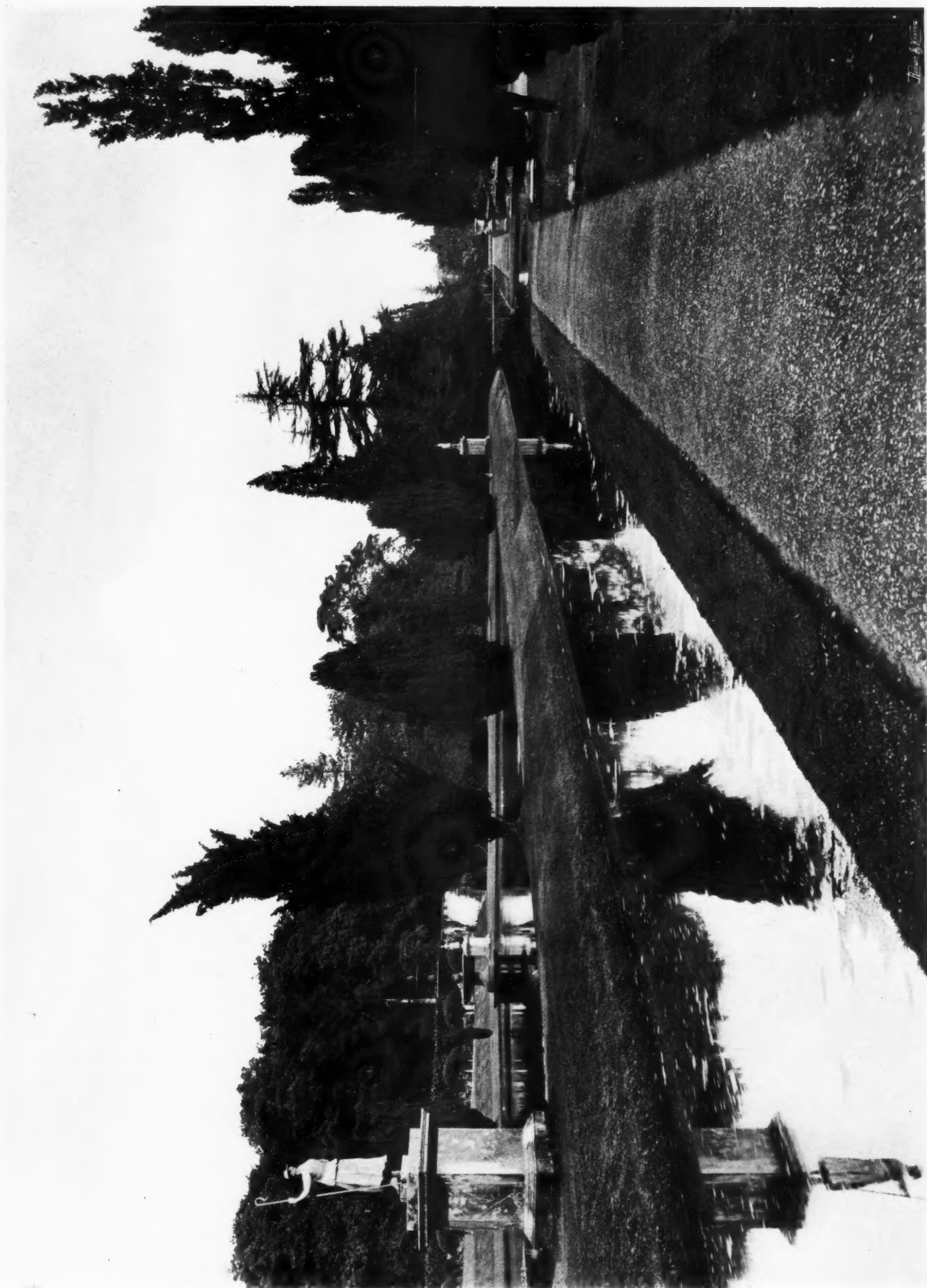
THE ROSE GARDEN.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

tions. Here will be discerned the character which we spoke of in the beginning. All is simple and stately, and flowers have no place in the composition. Great banks of evergreen trees are the background, and are reflected in the pellucid waters, about which stand monumental yews, and at each corner a beautiful figure in lead. At one end the Lady and her Beau look at one another across the yews, and, at the other, there is a Shepherdess with her crook, and an extremely fine statue of the Reaper, sharpening his scythe. These are admirable examples of leadwork, and are peculiarly appropriate to their surroundings. In the centre is a fountain, and beyond the basin is a long, still canal reflecting the conifers, and margined by beautiful turf. Then we reach another lawn fringed with yews and with the opening of a vista between fine foliage.

Wonderful quiet and charm pervade the place, resulting from the lovely greensward and the varied tints of the trees, all

reflected in the glassy mirrors of the rectangular water and the long canal. In the park is a magnificent avenue of Chili pine or *Araucaria imbricata*, planted about 1842, in which year the last Lord Rolle died. Some of these trees have produced cones for many years, and the avenue is one of the finest of its kind in the kingdom. There are others of beech and oak, scarcely less notable, the trees being veritable giants. Bicton is a terrestrial paradise, and hours may be spent in the famous arboretum, in which is



"COUNTRY LIFE."

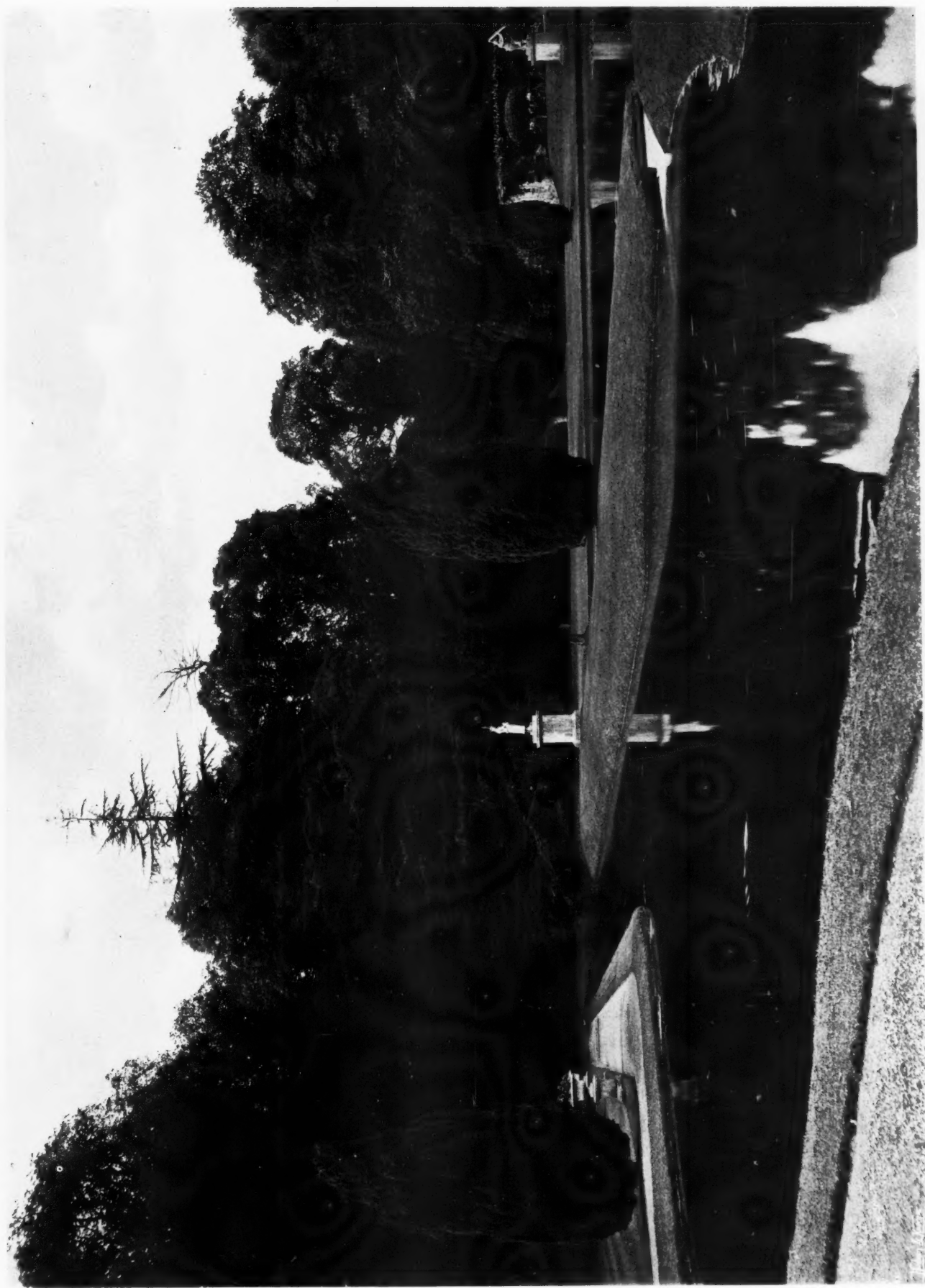
THE CANAL.

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THE SHADOW OF A YEW.

COUNTRY LIFE.



"COUNTRY LIFE."

WATER, TURF, AND FOLIAGE.

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THE LAWN AND ITS ADORNMENTS.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

represented nearly every hardy family of trees and shrubs, selected for size and beauty and systematically arranged. This arboretum will challenge comparison with any other in England for perfection and variety. We shall not go much further in our description. The fine greenhouse at the margin of the rose garden is of unusual design, and is as beautiful in its contents as the orangery. We also illustrate some of the detailed features of one of the lawns, with its stone-margined beds, its fountain, its cedars, and its palms. We are extremely glad to depict these splendid gardens, which bear evidence of the great care and artistic judgment with which they have been developed and are maintained. They certainly rank among the most beautiful and characteristic gardens in the West of England.

THE ASIATIC BOGEY.

ASIA is not more prolific in variety of landscape than in the diversity of "views" which those who study her politics entertain. Mr. Meredith Townsend, whose collected articles of many years have been published, under the title of "Asia and Europe," by Messrs. Archibald Constable and Co. (5s. net), is a veteran pessimist. He reviews the history of European effort in Asia, from Alexander to the Kaiser, and pronounces it vain and transitory. Especially does he ululate over the approaching downfall of British rule in India. "Asia will shortly regain her own, and the work of governing India will be transferred from European and Christian to Asiatic and Mussulman or pagan hands."

That the future relations of Europe and Asia constitute a problem whose vastness almost appals is true, but this is no reason for approaching the subject in a philosophical state of blue funk. "Within five years of our departure," says Mr. Meredith Townsend, "we shall recognise that the greatest experiment ever made by Europe in Asia was but an experiment after all." Shall we? Supposing, for the sake of argument, that we were compelled to depart from India, is it not just as easy to put the mantle of prophecy on the other shoulder, and say that within five months we should be back again, stronger than ever? For, in that miscellaneous congeries of peoples, states, and creeds which we call India, there is no people, state, or creed which could possibly subdue or rule the rest if we chose to intervene. Whether we returned to back the Sikh against the Moslem, or the Hindu against either, with the Gurkha against all, we should be bound to win.

But, even for the sake of argument, there is no reason to indulge in such dyspeptic suppositions as that we shall be driven

out of India, even for a period. Should the Mussulman rebel, the Sikh and the Gurkha and the Mahratta would be proud and glad, with our assistance, to smash him. Should the Hindu majority of the population attempt to upset our rule, we could fold our hands and run free excursion trains from the Punjab and the frontier for Pathans or other Mahomedans who wished to take their knives to Bengal and Madras and use them. *Divide et impera* is sometimes absurdly quoted as the mainspring of our rule in India. The truth is, that the people are so utterly divided that our rule is the only link which binds them together in pretended harmony.

This truth was abundantly demonstrated in the Indian Mutiny. Mr. Meredith Townsend quotes this catastrophe as precedent for the more awful cataclysm which he foresees. But, if India "revolted" then—as he specifically declares—how could the "small film of white men" have regained the upper hand? It is an ungenerous view of India—as if it were a "reconquered" country—which he takes. Let any Englishman, now enjoying a cold-weather tour in India, turn to the Mutiny Memorial outside the battered walls of Delhi, and read the names of heroes inscribed thereon—the names of the men who died to win back India for England—and what will he see? Many familiar British names, it is true; but whole columns also of the names of valiant natives of India. Which of the Punjab Native States are rich in territory and honour to-day? Those which stood by us in the Mutiny. What does Lord Roberts quote as the most heroic deed he ever witnessed? The action of a native of India, fighting on our side, against the mutineers.

It is a selfish and silly insular prejudice to suppose that we in 1857 reconquered a revolted India. With the aid of loyal natives we recovered the position from which we had been momentarily thrown; and so, please Fate, we should always recover from similar disaster—unless a powerful European foe supported the rebels. That is our danger; but it is not one which comes within the scope of Mr. Townsend's view of Europe and Asia. He simply piles up historical platitudes to prove that Europe cannot annex, absorb, partition, or even "influence," India, much less the whole of Asia. He denies even that Japan has profited by European "influence"!

Yet those who know enough of the East not to be misled by one-sided rhetoric may read Mr. Townsend's book with pleasure and profit, and they will find many fine phrases of fact in his republished essays. "Fashion, which in Europe is peremptory and endlessly capricious, is in Asia peremptory but unchangeable." That is a large and strange truth, well stated. That the Asiatic, again, "is possessed by the fatal idea that falsehood is an exercise of the intellect, to be judged of by its object and

its success," is the expression in a sentence of the fundamental contrast between East and West.

At the same time, there is an atmosphere of staleness about many of these essays which a little judicious editing might have partially removed. Some are too manifestly based upon newspaper articles of past years; and others refer to controversies of the past as if they belonged to the present. Sir Auckland Colvin, as Lieutenant-Governor of the North-West Provinces of India, is quoted in the present tense, and Mr. Wilfrid Blunt is criticised as reopening an old question. Sir Roper Lethbridge, too, is mentioned as having "just published" his "Golden Book of India."

HORSE-BREEDING & MANAGEMENT.

MR. F. ADYE has not a great deal that is new to tell us about horse-breeding and the management of horses. The valuable part of his book is derived from his personal experience. If those who write on this and kindred subjects would only tell us what they have learned themselves, our knowledge would be considerably greater than it is. Mr. Adye is, however, the first writer on horse-breeding who has fairly faced the question, "What effect will motor-cars have on horse-breeding as an industry?" His conclusion, which is one with which we shall all, on reflection, agree, is that motor-cars will not greatly affect the interests of those who breed for sport or pleasure. That is, it will still be worth while to breed hunters, polo ponies, and the

better class of carriage horses. On the other hand, the introduction of motors must affect the trade in vanners, general utility horses, and heavy draught horses in towns, and probably, to a certain extent, in the country also. Mr. Adye thinks that the motor as a pleasure vehicle will, like the bicycle, have its day, but that for the carriage and distribution of goods a great future is before it. If this be the case, steam and electricity must displace a great many horses of the useful type. This will probably affect the supply for remounts, since fewer horses will be bred of the kind that are useful, or at all events saleable, as troop horses. Our cavalry is even now the worst mounted in Europe. Mr. Adye notes the superiority of German cavalry horses to those in the ranks of the British cavalry, and to these we may add, from our own observation, those of the Italian Army. The probability is that this class of horse will deteriorate still further with the diminishing demand for general utility in horselflesh. We do not, however, agree with the author in his advocacy of Government studs. There will still be some good horses of the hunter and harness type bred, and as breeders come to understand more clearly that there is money only in the best class of horses, they will be thankful if the Government could see its way to take the second-rate ones off their hands as three year olds.

The combined facts of the steady increase in the number of men who will need not only to be mounted in time of war, but to be trained to horsemanship and horse-mastership in time of peace, and the steady decrease in the number of horses bred, will sooner or later force the authorities to take up the plan of the purchase of young horses. This has been urged on them by every competent authority on the subject of horselflesh. We know that the Remount Department, through no fault of its own, broke down in the last war, and we are equally certain that it will break down again. Government studs are necessary in foreign countries because so few private persons breed horses. In England all that is needed is to encourage the enterprise of the landowners and farmers now engaged in the industry.

THE HEYTHROP HOUNDS.



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THE DOG PACK AND HUNTSMAN.

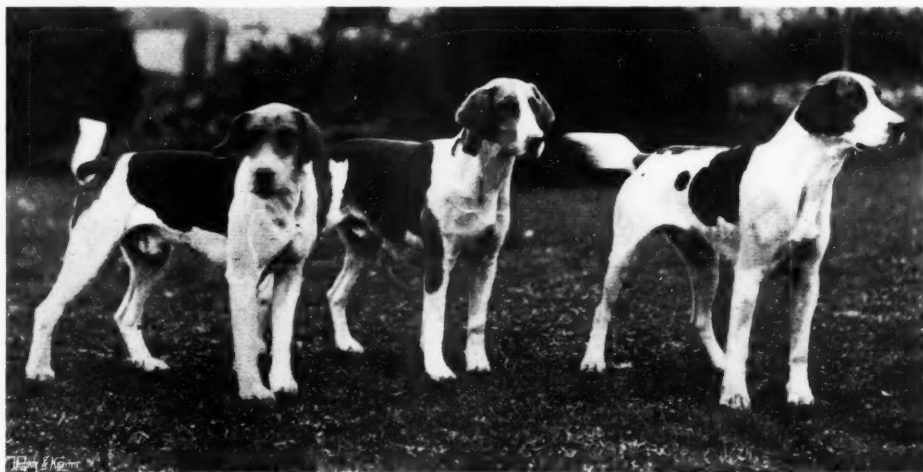
"COUNTRY LIFE."

THE heading of this article can hardly fail to strike an answering chord of happy memories and associations in the minds of many readers. There are, no doubt, Hunts more famous and countries more renowned in hunting story; but there are few the very name of

which has, like that of the Heythrop, the power to recall the brightest days of our youth. Most Oxford men who have hunted during their undergraduate life will recollect fondly some glorious moments with the Heythrop. When a saint's day and a hunting day coincided we made holiday, and went out with the Heythrop to ride with the flying bitches over the stone walls. What stories of the pack

and its former huntsmen were handed down to us! Of Jem Hills, who could hunt a fox in a style many men have tried to imitate and have failed. Few men could venture to lift a pack off their noses as he did for half a run, and then induce them to hunt steadily for the other half. The Heythrop is

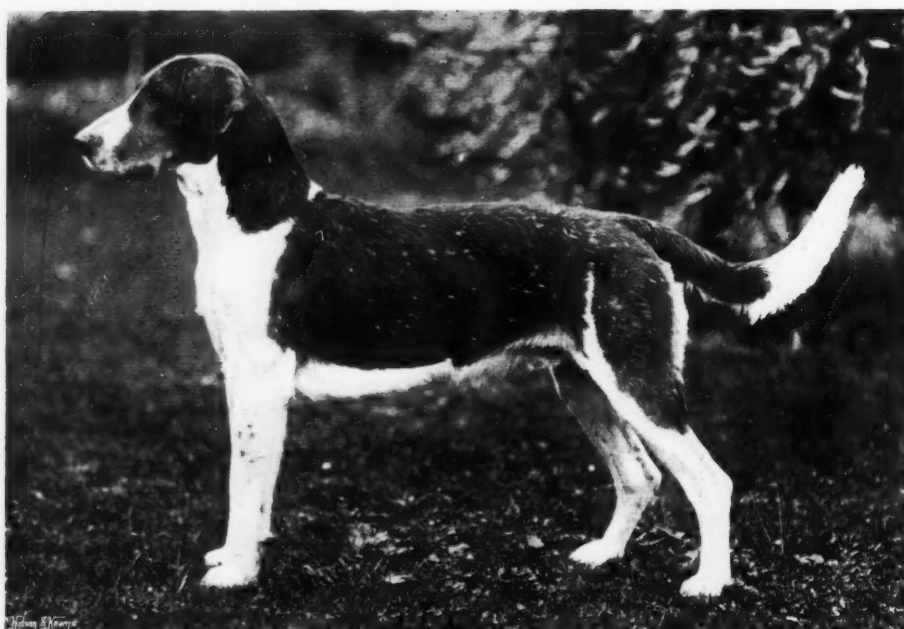
not a good scenting country, but Jem Hills could make a run where other men could not have achieved a slow hunt. Then there was Mr. Hall, who hunted the bitch pack. He always wore a tall hat, and could not bear to have the hounds interfered with, but our seniors used to tell us of the sport he showed. He was, perhaps, the most thorough-going exponent of the principle of "let 'em alone." He was popular



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WHITBY, BLUCHER, AND GRASPER.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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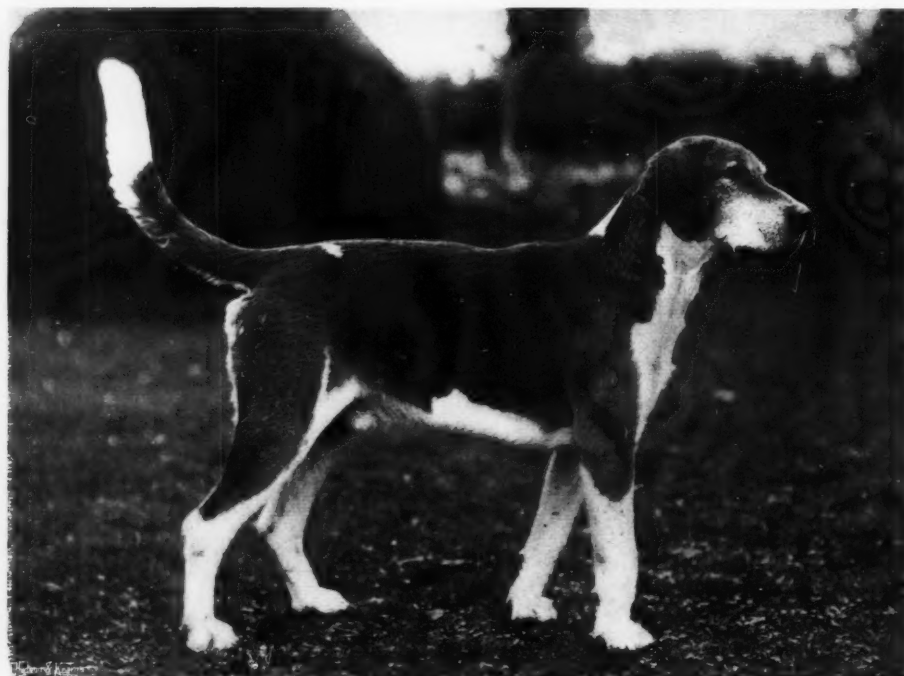
"COUNTRY LIFE."



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STATELY, SPANGLE, AND BUTTERFLY.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



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DRUID.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

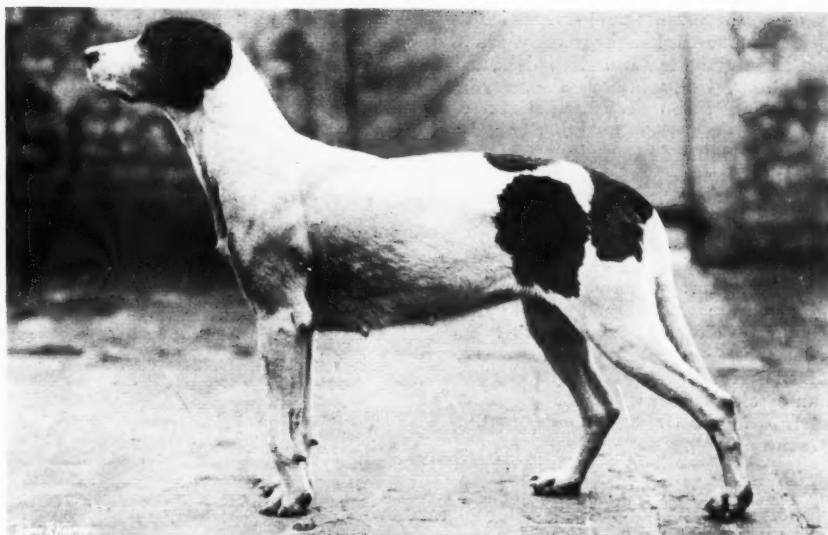
with the undergraduates, and forbore with their eagerness with marvellous patience. Then came Mr. Albert Brassey, who bought Heythrop House, took the hounds in 1873, and has been Master now for thirty years. He is one of the most popular and successful of Masters. If you hunt with the Heythrop you will see a field under perfect control, yet hardly hear a voice raised. If a man rides over hounds or across seeds, the Master marks him, and riding up alongside, will tell him quietly of his misdoings.

The kennels of the Heythrop are at Chipping Norton, below the town, on a pleasant slope. They were moved here about 1835, when the country ceased to be an appanage of the Badminton Hunt, and the Duke of Beaufort gave it up. Before that time the kennels had been at Heythrop House, and stood where the laundry of the present house is now. The foundation of the new pack was, of course, Badminton, to which were added drafts from the Fitzwilliam and from Mr. Drake's. The Heythrop, being a pack which has to hunt over a poor scenting country, needs hounds with noses; and as they have strong woods at Blenheim and Eynsham, plenty of tongue is also wanted. They had in my time hounds of a more throaty appearance than is quite fashionable nowadays. There are people who say that throatiness is correlated to keenness of nose and fullness of tongue. I would draw the attention of readers, therefore, to the portrait of Tartar as being quite of the old Heythrop stamp. It is a good thing when kennels are able, in the universal levelling to a single type that is taking place, to retain their characteristic type of hound, for it is probable that the type was evolved to suit the country. In other respects Tartar is an excellent hound, with good bone, and plenty of it. He has a sensible head, with plenty of hound character, and, I should suppose, there is no better worker. But if we were called upon to judge the hounds for a prize, there could be no doubt about the selection. Harbinger must have the card. To tell the truth, I have seen no hound that pleases me better lately. Those who wish to have a foxhound type to trust to will do well to preserve this picture, and keep it before their eyes. The hound's shoulders are beautiful, the back and loins full of power, the thighs and hocks placed so as to make speed a certainty, legs and feet leave nothing to be wished for, and the whole is surmounted by a head which has that look of mild wisdom that is so charming in a well-bred foxhound. Another foxhound that should, if appearances go for anything, be a true friend to his huntsman, is Druid. This is a hound of great power and substance, and looks to have stamina and a sound constitution. Again, Discount is a hound of well-defined character, excellent in front. As the photograph has caught him he looks longer and a little less compact than the others, and the same remarks apply to Why Not. Then there is the group, and here we may offer the artist a compliment on the happy moment at which he has seized Whitby, Blucher, and Grasper. The last named is full of quality, though not of a fashionable colour, yet he brings back to my mind the old Heythrop pack, which I seem to remember as having more black and

white than would be acceptable nowadays. But there was a good deal of that colour in Berkshire. Charles Davis left a very black and white pack in the Royal Kennels, and there were a fair number in the Old Berkshire. It will be noted, however, that Sturman, the present excellent huntsman of the Heythrop, is bringing the pack, especially the dogs, more up to the fashionable standard in this matter. But all hounds that descend from the older Badminton strains must have a tendency to revert to light colours. The Badminton hounds have, perhaps, a more direct descent from the old white staghound than any other pack, and it is through them we can carry the ancestry of our foxhounds right back to the white St. Huberts—called Talbots in England—of the Benedictine monks of the Ardennes.

These are hounds to find a fox and to hunt him over some of those Oxfordshire steam-turned ploughs, which are luckily perhaps cold scenting, for otherwise how could our horses live over them at any pace? But in the afternoon, with a fresh horse, give me the bitch pack over the stone walls. In a country of stone walls, the hounds with a scent and a start have an advantage over the fox. But where there are thick hedgerows, as in Leicestershire, although a fox may leave a stronger scent, yet he gains at every fence, slipping through much more easily than the hounds can follow.

We talk and write and think so much about the fox that, perhaps, we hardly realise what a very little animal he really is. But in a stone-wall country the fox has no advantage; he has to scramble over the walls, and probably the hounds which spring and fly travel quicker than he does. Besides, the fox is often hardly out of sight of the huntsman all the way, so that hounds can be put right in a moment if they overrun the line. Nevertheless, I saw a fox puzzle the pack, and at last beat hounds completely, in this very country some



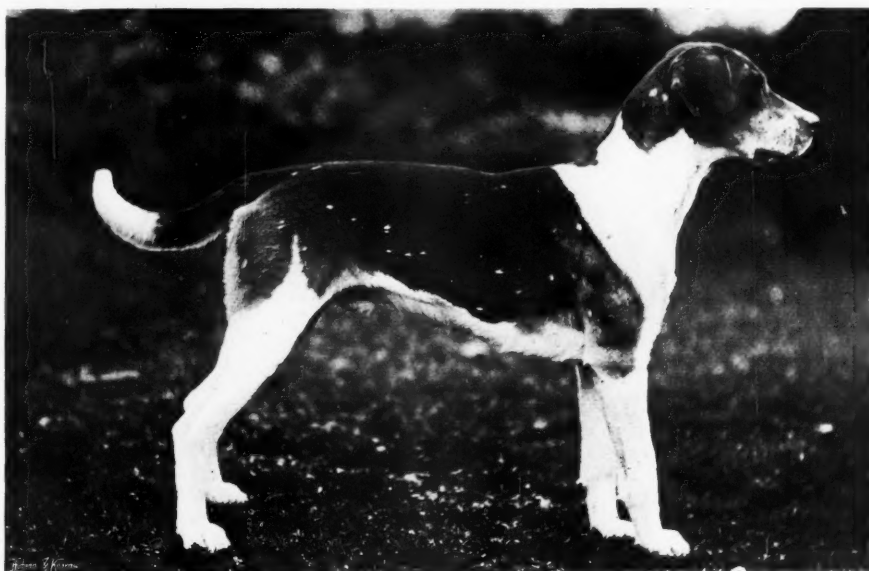
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CHEERFUL.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

years ago. It was an outlying fox, or one from a small covert, I forget which. We had run him hard for twenty minutes

over the wall country. I was riding on trial a very bold, keen, but hard-mouthed horse belonging to an Oxford dealer. We reached a wall which hounds crossed, and my horse, which would be with them if he could see them, jumped also. The fox had jumped on to the wall, run a little way down it, and dropped down on the same side as he had jumped up. The hounds, of course, checked, swung round, and two or three couple, jumping the wall, hit off the line. My horse would take no denial, and back we



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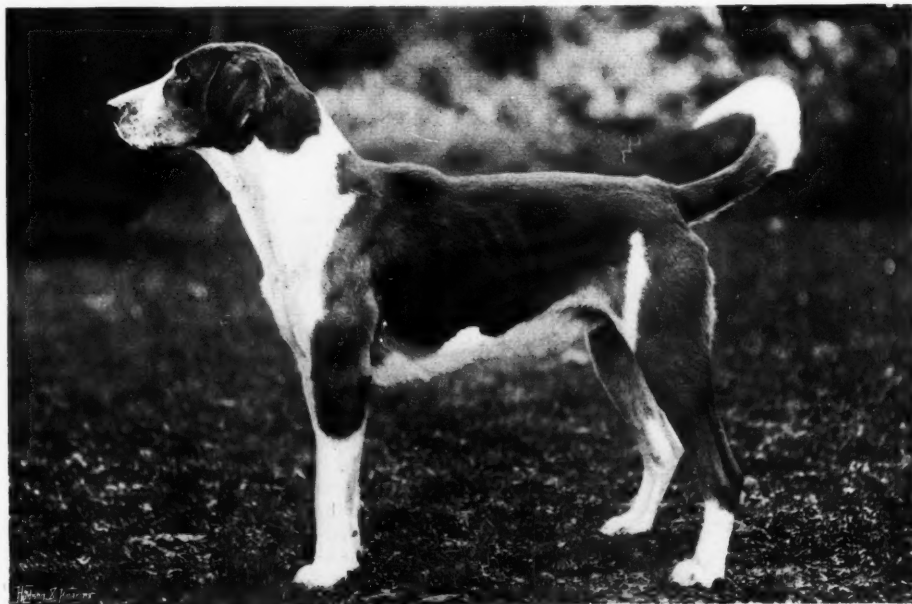
WHY NOT.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

came over the wall. Well, the fox played the same game a little further on. This time he dropped down on the far side, and turning sharp to the right, ran along under the wall. Hounds flashed over and flashed back, and twice more I had to jump, and, conscious of the chaff that awaited me, I was not sorry when the fox, after some more dodging, went to ground in a refuge he had doubtless had in his mind all along. Two things I gained that day—a knowledge of a fox's resources in a stone-wall country and a good horse.

This brings me back again to the Heythrop bitch pack. Lengthy striding bitches they are too. Look at Stately, Spangle, and Butterfly prettily grouped on the flags. They look like flying. Note also their legs and feet. Of the other two, Barmaid takes my fancy most. She has such galloping power behind and such a beautifully placed head and neck. Altogether the Heythrop is a fortunate Hunt in its Master, its huntsman, and its hounds. A well-known Leicestershire man used to tell me that he thought, looking back, he never had had such sport elsewhere as in the Heythrop.

In any case, it is a peculiar pleasure to write of such an historic Hunt as the Heythrop, with which are connected such



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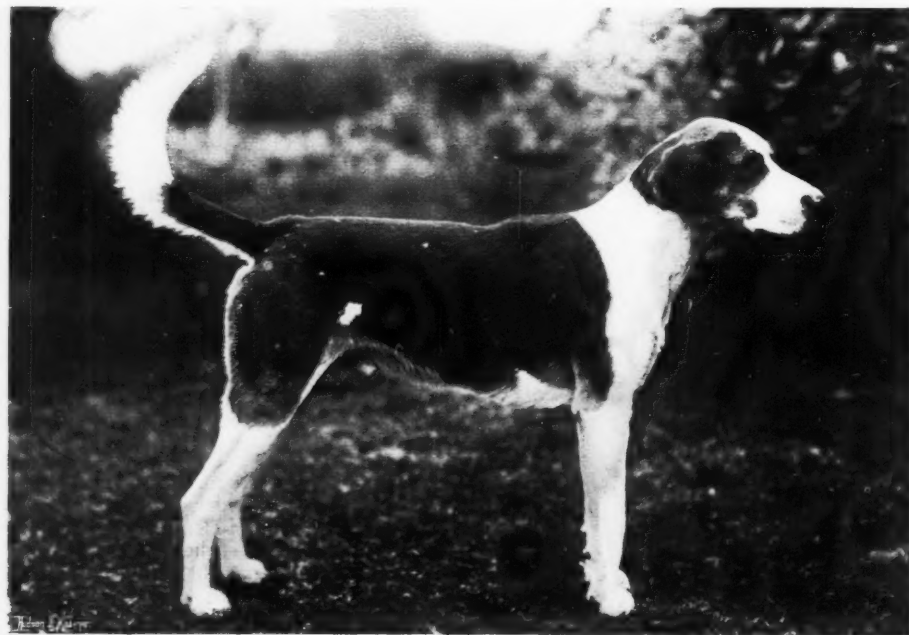
TARTAR.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

names as the seventh and eighth Dukes of Beaufort (the latter used to hunt with his father's hounds from Oxford), Will Long, Jem Hills, the late Lord Redesdale, and Mr. A. W. Hall. As to the hounds, they, too, have a history, and great stories are told of Nobleman, who once carried a line down a dusty road for a mile and a-half when no other hound would own it; of Ranter, who was found dead under "Ranter's Oak" in Wychwood Forest. I am not going to trouble the readers of COUNTRY LIFE with pedigrees, but two of the hounds depicted here, Discount and Why Not, look as if they might well come of a famous Heythrop family that claimed descent from Mr. Drake's Bluecap. Heythrop farmers have ever been good sportsmen and fox preservers, and that they are not less good now than of old is shown by the fact that whereas in days not so long ago the Heythrop hunted three days in the week, now they hunt four. But perhaps that is only an illustration of the old hunting paradox that to have foxes you must kill them.

A BOOK OF THE WEEK.

VOLTAIRE will always be reckoned as the embodiment in himself of the literary genius of France. Carlyle said of him truly enough that during his long lifetime he had never given utterance to one memorable thought, but then he did not pose as a thinker. His style has all the qualities we associate with that of the best French prose. It is in the right sense simple, lucid, direct, and light. If we seek in it for the qualities which we value in work such as that, for instance, of Sir Thomas Browne, where imagination is as abundant as it is in fine poetry, we must do so in vain; but then the Anglo-Saxon dreaminess is not part of the French character. It is more easily paralleled in Germany, and, indeed, the prose of Heine can be said to combine the qualities of two nations. On one side is the perfect lucidity of the best French writers, on the other the dreamy imaginativeness often to be found in the Teuton. But Voltaire had nothing of what we moderns consider to be poetry. It does not matter whether he is writing a "Charles XII." or a "Henriade," a "Candide" or a set of "Letters from England," we always find him making his point clearly, never diving deep into the under-currents and hidden emotions of which actions, as it were, are only the algebraical symbols. His life, therefore, is a very entertaining one to write, and in *The Life of Voltaire* (Smith, Elder) Mr. S. G. Tallentyre has achieved a brilliant success.

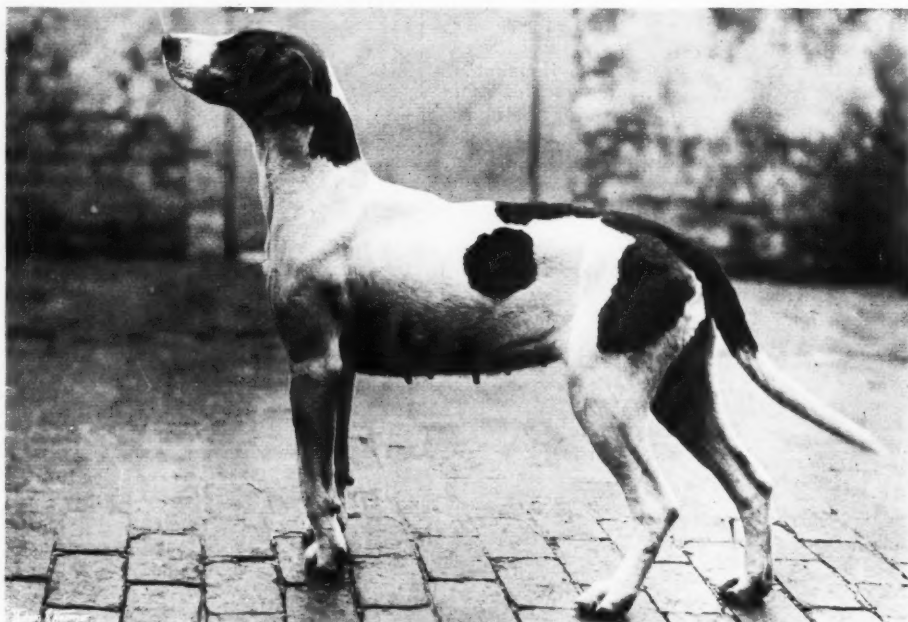


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HARBINGER.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

In no part of it has he attempted what one may call an appreciative essay, but he has treated his biography more in the spirit of a novelist; that is to say, he confines himself mainly to the facts and incidents of his hero's life, and is never, or very seldom, tempted to stop and play the moralist. His liveliness, spirit, and finish of style lend to his history something of the charm of romance.



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BARMAID.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

The life of Voltaire is in itself an extremely interesting one, and he was born at a critical moment in the history of France; that is, in 1694, when Louis XIV. was at the height of his military glory. M. Arouet, his father, was a notary, and is one of the most living of Mr. Tallentyre's *dramatis personæ*. Bourgeois in taste, obstinate and self-willed in character, full of business instincts, and yet in no way devoid of kindness and the sweeter virtues, he was a typical Frenchman of the middle classes. Mme. Arouet does not count in the story. She seems to have been an amiable, good-natured woman; but, as she died when her illustrious child was still an infant, he appears to have carried no remembrance of her with him, and she is only a masked figure in the comedy. The boy came into the world as a sickly child who did not seem likely to survive into manhood. Even in his very early days he was remarkable for that thinness to which his contemporaries frequently refer, and for those bright, keen, searching eyes that continued to distinguish him after fourscore. But perhaps the determining factor in his career was that his early education was taken in hand by a typical French abbé. An abbé in those days meant something the opposite of a religious person, and this one may be taken as a fair specimen of his kind. Gay and licentious in life, insincere in the few beliefs he professed, holding his religion purely and simply as a means of gaining an income, scoffing at the very mysteries he was called upon to administer, it was he that laid the foundation of those free-thinking doctrines that afterwards distinguished Voltaire. Mr. Tallentyre says:

"What a strange picture it is! This child lisped scoffings as other children lisped prayers. He had very big brown eyes, bright with intelligence, in his little wizened old man's face. The precocity greatly entertained Chateaufort. Père Arouet may have been amused too, in private, at this infant unbeliever—the state of the Church making it hard then for any man, at once honest and reasonable, to put faith in her teachings."

Before Voltaire was seven he had learnt to repeat J. B. Rousseau's ribald deistical poem, "Le Moïse," by heart, and to read the fables of La Fontaine. In 1704, when he was ten years of age, he was sent as a parlour boarder to the Jesuit college of St. Louis-le-Grand, the Eton of

France, as it has been called. Here, like a great many other literary people, he was successful in avoiding the more serious subjects of study, but he crammed his mind full of literature, and imbibed a passion for Cicero, Horace, and Virgil. He learnt, too, to write the easy, fluent verse for which he was afterwards distinguished, and formed the ambition to be a literary man. His father keenly objected:

"'Literature,' said Maître Arouet, with the irate dogmatism which takes no denial, 'is the profession of a man who wishes to be useless to society, a burden to his relatives, and to die of hunger.'"

So fathers have willed from time immemorial; but when a child sets himself in this direction it is as easy to withstand the decrees of Fate as to oppose him. Young Arouet, whatever he was set to do, whether at school, or subsequently, when he made a pretence at studying for the law, was always following the same object. He continued his verse-writing, and, as Mr. Tallentyre puts it:

"Arouet had from the first 'lisp'd in numbers, for the numbers came'; but when he saw on the one hand the crowded prisons and brutalised peasantry, and on the other the luxurious debauchery of the Regent's Court, the numbers began for the first time to have a careless little note in them of a most piquant satire."

The boy is father to the man, and in the early training of his youth we see the foundations laid of the singular character that was afterwards to dominate a brilliant period in European culture. To those witty, dissolute abbés of his childhood we may trace the phrase which became, as it were, the watchword of his life, "*Ecrasez l'infâme*."

"In 1757, in writing to d'Alembert, Voltaire had first given *l'infâme* a name—the Phantom. A few days later he called it the Colossus. Under any name a d'Alembert would recognise it. On May 18th, 1759, Frederick the Great spoke of it by that title it was to bear for ever, in one of those bitter yearning letters he wrote to his old friend. 'You will still caress *l'infâme* with one hand and scratch it with the other; you will treat it as you have treated me and all the world.' And in June Voltaire replied: 'Your Majesty reproaches me with sometimes caressing *l'infâme*. My God, no! I only work to extirpate it.' And the next year—June 3rd, 1760—"I want you to crush *l'infâme*; that is the great point. It must be reduced to the same condition as it is in England. You can do it if you will. It is the greatest service one can render to humankind."

"Henceforward, his allusions to it in his letters became more and more frequent. Sometimes he abbreviated it to *Ecr. Pin*. Sometimes he wrote in one corner *E. P.* The first of duties is to annihilate *Pinf.*; confound *Pinf.* as much as you can."

That was most decidedly the motive power of Voltaire's life.

His method of looking at things could scarcely be better illustrated than by his *not* about Admiral Byng. He had known the admiral as a young man in England, and indignation in anyone else would probably have found some very heated expression, but Voltaire put it all in lines that have become immortal. "In this country it is good to put an admiral to death now and then, *pour encourager les autres*."

It is no wonder that he found England a very congenial country, as in those days the men who were taking a lead in literature were full of the French qualities. What would one not have given to have been present when Swift and Voltaire dined together! The dark, malignant, scathing Irishman must have stood out in singular contrast to the no less witty but gay and flippant Frenchman. It is only in France that we can find any approach to Swift's trenchant satire, and in Addison, Steele, and the other essayists of the time there is far more of French lucidity, far less of that mysticism which we prize in a line of English writers which goes from Browne to Johnson and Charles Lamb, and thence to Macaulay and Carlyle. Easy is it to see also that while Voltaire had genius enough to enable him to understand and appreciate Shakespeare, he must have found something harsh and almost barbarous in the greater man's neglect of those *politesses* for which France was then so famed.

Mr. Tallentyre, without throwing any new light on the relations between Voltaire and Frederick the Great, describes this episode with wit and sprightliness. Indeed, Mr. Tallentyre evidently began his writing with a preformed and definite conception of Voltaire's character, and he maintains it with an art that would have done credit to a novelist. But Voltaire appears here in a somewhat too favourable light. It is certain that when the Christians pointed him out as an unworthy assailant they were not far wrong. He had very little sense of honour, and did not scruple to take religious oaths when it suited him. In money transactions he did not escape scathe, and his relations with women were not distinguished, to say the least of it, by the virtue of constancy. To atone for all these deficiencies he had an unrelenting liveliness of disposition, a mordant wit, a gaiety that nothing could cloud, and years of study and experience had made his mind a storehouse of fact and fancy.

A minor point of interest is that Mr. Tallentyre, ignoring the results arrived at by various critics, attributes the

invention of the name Voltaire to a relative, so that really it was no invention, thus upsetting the tradition that it was an anagram formed out of the word Arouet and the initials. On this point there has been a considerable amount of controversy of the tea-party kind, and we do not feel quite sure that the present author has said the last word on it.

EIGHTEENTH CENTURY MASTERS AT MESSRS. AGNEW'S.

IF, as Whistler said, there is no such thing as "English Art"—one might as well speak of "English mathematics"—there is undoubtedly such a thing as an English type. At Agnew's in Bond Street, where the ninth exhibition in aid of the Artists' Benevolent Institution is being held, such characteristic features look out from the frames that one is conscious of looking at what seems to be a collection of family portraits. Have not these women the same tone of complexion, the same rather elongated neck and sloping shoulders, the same round slight arms and beautiful, thin, elegant hands? When we think of the men and women painted by Rubens, Rembrandt, Memlinc, and Raffael, these characteristics of our English women are borne home to us with still more emphasis.

We are generally certain of finding some of the masterpieces of the eighteenth century in this loan collection. There are but twenty-five pictures in all, but almost each one is worth examining. It will give some idea of the interest of the works when we note that there are no less than five Romneys, four Gainsboroughs, a Reynolds, two or three Raeburns and Hoppners, and two large Turner landscapes. One of these, the "Dutch Fisher Boats," is exhibited for the first time. But the exhibition is worth a visit were it but for the painting of the hand and arm of Romney's Lady Howard de Walden, and the large rustic scene by Gainsborough, known as "The Mushroom Gatherer." This is one of Gainsborough's largest, as it is surely one of his most successful, subject pictures. It is painted in that loose, liquid, characteristic manner peculiar to him, and which caused someone to say of his pictures that they looked as if they had been blown on to the canvas. Nothing could well be more natural and spontaneous than this rustic group. One can almost hear the breath coming from the parted lips of the sleeping girl. The head is thrown back most naturally, showing a white throat and breast bathed in light. The basket, full of mushrooms, on her arm is indicated with wonderful precision, and the dog at her side, who seems to be ready to bark at anyone who should intrude on his mistress, is painted with all the life and vigour Gainsborough invariably displays in the painting of these animals. The figure of the lad, the haymaker, who leans on the fence to gaze on this "vision of youth and beauty," is more difficult to make out, owing, no doubt, to the fact of its being in shadow and to the height at which it comes on the canvas. From a distance, however, one can well distinguish the strength of the drawing and painting in the pose of the figure, as well as the expression of mingled curiosity and affectionate admiration in the face. In the centre of the picture is the sweep of dewy meadow which comes between the two figures and gives an impression of morning freshness to the landscape. To those whose ideas of "finish" in painting are bounded by the notion of minute rendering of surface detail, this work might seem but "a sketch." But to those who realise the true and wide meaning of the word "finish," the meaning which comprises the all-important question of the relation of the parts to the whole, this canvas is a complete expression, both technical and poetic, of a scene of rural life. There is, further, a spontaneity and naturalism in the grouping which is rarely seen in the somewhat artificial arrangements of the works of the period. To illustrate this more clearly one need but turn to the portraits hanging around—to the charming Henrietta Elizabeth Frederica, for instance, by Hoppner. This artless girl is represented in a white muslin gown, which shows off to great advantage the simple lines of her throat and shoulders, but one hand, in an obviously posed and unnatural manner, rests upon a rock of the most conventional representation conceivable. These things cannot destroy the beauty of the head and figure, but they are, undoubtedly, no help to it. Gainsborough could never have painted a young girl with so little spontaneity of movement. He was too great a lover of life and the natural graces of the other sex.

Besides the portraits of women, of which some have all the excellencies we expect to find in Romney and Gainsborough, the painting of Captain David Birrell by Raeburn, and the portrait of William Pitt by Hoppner, both afford splendid opportunities for the study of these two excellent, if less known masters. Of the landscapes shown, the most interesting is the large Venetian "Dieppe Harbour" by Turner. Though there is a shade too much of that reddish brown he was so fond of putting in his foregrounds to give value and atmosphere to the distance, this, none the less, is a beautiful example of Turner's rich imaginative art. It is exceptionally interesting for its architectural work. Evidently painted before the artist had quite forgotten his labours in the architect's office, there is a certain firmness and precision in the drawing of the fishing-boats, the houses along the quay, and the masts and rigging of the vessels we do not always find in the later Venetian pictures. The atmosphere of the cool morning—the sun has just risen above the houses—is rendered with admirable tenderness of tone and colour. This coolness and quiet over the distant streets and shipping is contrasted with the nearer parts of the picture, where crowds of fisher-folk are jostling one another unloading the boats moored alongside the quay. The picture has interests of various kinds. Apart from the purely plastic features, there is the careful portraiture of the old houses. These are very much like our own Queen Anne and Georgian buildings, only they look much more rosy and clean. The picture was exhibited at the Academy in 1825, when Turner was fifty, but no doubt it was commenced some time before that date. It is a most interesting example of what would probably be called the artist's "middle period," and well deserves careful examination.



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FITTLEWORTH OLD LOCK.

J. B. B. Wellington.



Copyright

ON WISLEY COMMON.

J. B. B. Wellington.

FROM THE FARMS.

THE ISLINGTON CATTLE SHOW.

FOR the moment the interest of farmers is transferred from the country to the town. The annual show of the Smithfield Club is a pleasant excuse for an annual jaunt to London, in which business and pleasure are combined, and the exhibition is one calculated to gratify the tastes of those engaged in the feeding of fat stock. In numbers it compares very favourably with those of recent years, and the quality is everything that could be desired; but the interest of the experts was centred on the judging, in which the awards given at Norwich and Birmingham were reversed in a remarkable manner. As usual the King succeeded in carrying off many important prizes, though the chief honours were denied to him. His successes included the following: For Devons he won the Breed Cup, value £25, the first prize in Class 1, the third prize in Class 1, the second prize in Class 2, and the first prize in Class 3; for Hereford cattle he won the Breed Cup and the first prize in Class 5; for shorthorn cattle he won two second prizes and a third; for Highland cattle he won

continuing the single-judge system at this exhibition. In cattle every man has an ideal of his own, and he brings to the ring certain prepossessions that, consciously or not, induce him to favour the kind of animal he would have liked to breed himself, whereas if several judges are employed their united verdict carries far more weight, and the prejudices of one man are counterbalanced by those of another. It is worth noting that the judging was got over more expeditiously than has ever happened before at this exhibition, but the general feeling was that more time would have been well used if it had been employed for the purpose of arriving at verdicts that would have commanded more general approval. Among the other winners of the show Mr. R. W. Hudson takes a very high place, some of his prizes being the silver cup for the best beast not over two years, the winner for him being Danesfield Ruby Lass. In Herefords, Lord Llangattock distinguished himself, as did Lord Tredegar in shorthorns. The Earl of Derby was well to the front with his Sussex cattle, as was Sir W. O. Corbet with red-poll. The Earl of Rosebery got a first prize for Aberdeen-Angus steers not exceeding two years in age. The Hon. F. G. Wynn won in the corresponding class for Welsh cattle. Sir John Gilmour took a similar honour for cross-breds. Mr. R. W. Hudson was first in the class for Kerries, Dexters, and Shetlands,



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GRAZING KINE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

the Breed Cup, a third and a second prize; for Kerries, Dexters, and Shetlands he obtained two second prizes and two third prizes, but in competition for the championship he was worsted. The £50 silver cup for the best steer or ox was awarded to Mr. Cridlan's Aberdeen-Angus, Twin Ben, while His Majesty's Hereford, that won the challenge plate as the best animal in the show at Birmingham, had to be content with a reserve. In the next place the £50 silver cup for the best heifer went to an animal scarcely heard of before, Mr. R. L. Batchelor's Miss Charles. This put out the King's heifer, Fair One, who was first in her class, and winner of the extra prize for the best shorthorn at Birmingham. Mr. Hudson's Danesfield Patricia, first at Norwich, only got a reserve place. In the contest for the plate of 100 guineas for the best beast in the show, the battle was between Mr. Batchelor's heifer and Mr. Cridlan's Aberdeen-Angus steer. The former was given the premier honour and the other the reserve. The King's Challenge Cup for the best beast in the show bred by the exhibitor was awarded to The Baron, a cross-bred steer belonging to Mr. Douglas Fletcher, that took first at the Edinburgh Show, while Mr. Hudson's Danesfield Patricia was reserve. These awards were not received with unanimity by the experts present at the exhibition. Indeed, they have raised a very serious question as to the advisability of

and an easy first for small cross-breds. It is safe to prophesy that the popularity of small breeds of cattle will go on increasing. There are more customers for joints of moderate size, and a certain coarseness is inseparable from the more gigantic beast.

Sheep were not so numerous as they sometimes have been at this show, but the quality could not very easily be improved upon, and the judging gave much more satisfaction than had been the case with the cattle. The Challenge Cup, given by the Prince of Wales for the best pen of three sheep or lambs in the show bred by the exhibitor, was won by Mr. T. F. Buxton. The piece of plate, value £50, offered to the exhibitor of the best pen of three long-woolled sheep or lambs in the show, was awarded to Mr. S. E. Dean. The Breed Cups went as follows: For Leicester or Border Leicester, Mr. E. F. Jordan; Cotswolds, Mr. Thomas; Lincoln, Messrs. Dean and Sons; Kentish, Mr. Wotton; Devons, Mr. Matthews; Cheviot, Mr. McDowall; Mountain, Sir John Gilmour; Southdowns, Mr. C. W. R. Adeane; Hampshires, Mr. Buxton; Suffolks, Mr. Smith; Shropshires, Mr. Mills; Oxford Downs, Mr. Hobbs; Dorset, Mr. Kidner; cross-breds, Mr. Rush.

The pigs were extraordinarily good both as regards number and quality. The Champion Plate, given to the exhibitor

of the best pen of two pigs in the show, was carried off by Mr. Hiscock. Prince Christian's Challenge Cup, for the best two pigs in the show bred by the exhibitor, was won by A. Hiscock, jun.

LONDON'S ADULTERATED FOOD.

IT has long been known to all who are interested in the subject, that there is urgent necessity for taking steps to secure greater purity in the food supply of London. It was not before time that the Public Health Committee made a recommendation in regard to the milk supply. What is desired is that milk should be examined and tested at the principal railway termini. The reason for this sudden activity lies in a report given by Dr. Shirley Murphy. From this it appears that milk is more heavily adulterated in London than in any provincial town except Birmingham, Leeds, and Newcastle. Newcastle is an easy first, Birmingham is second, and Leeds third; but in Liverpool, Manchester, Bradford, West Ham, Hull, Bristol, Sheffield, Nottingham, Salford, and Leicester there is less adulteration than in the metropolis. Moreover, if we are to judge by the number of samples found adulterated, the wickedness of the milkman is on the increase. It seems to be assumed that at least some of this adulteration must be done either at the farms or on the line.

We do not ourselves believe that one farmer in a thousand puts water in his milk, and the arrangements at many dairies we have personally inspected have been such as to make it difficult, if not absolutely impossible, to adulterate. No doubt a certain proportion of the added water is put in at the big dairies, which receive their supplies from the farmer; but a great deal more is accounted for by the man who carries round the milk, and he is the most difficult to catch, because he deals with the article in its final stage. Still, it ought to be easily possible to check the practice, provided the officials who carry out the wishes of the Public Health Committee are honest. Only the other day a case was tried, and received considerable attention, which justifies the use of this clause. Assuming, however, that the officials are trustworthy, they can easily analyse the milk at the dairies, and again when it is being delivered to customers. Unexpectedness must, of course, be of the very essence of the contract.

It is quite impossible to analyse every delivery of milk, but sufficient samples could be taken to terrify the milkman. The matter is a difficult one to deal with, but it is also extremely important, as some of those who use adulterants do not confine themselves to pure water. Always during a summer drought there is a suspiciously large number of carts waiting outside the place where they sell condensed milk, and it is quite common for some of the more artful to use skim milk, so that the "other solids" are all right, and the presence of added water cannot be detected. If the farmer adulterates, he generally does so in the inside of the animal, that is, by feeding and giving stimulants that will enable him to produce a large quantity of milk of poor quality. He also, if he be one of the few black sheep that are in every fold, chooses cows that make up in quantity what they

lack in quality. A sterner administration of the regulation of the Board of Agriculture would certainly conduce to the purity of our food supply. It appears to us, also, that the trade in watercress will not be much benefited by Dr. King Warry's report on an outbreak of enteric at Hackney. He found that during an outbreak those who ate watercress suffered at least twice as much as the others. No doubt this is traceable to sewage.

CORRESPONDENCE.

FOR THE VET.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—If you can assist me in the following matter I shall be extremely obliged; it appears to be beyond the skill of the local vets. altogether. I have a well-bred harness-mare, eight years old, bought about a year ago. Shortly after I got her she commenced periodically to lower her head and shake it about, as if she had, say, earache. This habit is gradually becoming more frequent. She does not do it in the stable, but most after she has been running for about 10 min.; then, after she is fairly warm, she stops it altogether. There is no heat about the head. She has a very good appetite, drinks well, but in spite of everything that can be given her—including Thorley's Food—she is in low condition, and continues to get lower and lower. Nothing apparently wrong with teeth, and she digests food well. If you could give me any hints in the matter I should be very grateful, for she is a beautiful-tempered mare, and I do not want to lose her if I can possibly help it.—PUZZLED.

[Our hunting correspondent says: "There are three causes I should suggest for the habit mentioned by your correspondent 'Puzzled.' 1. There may be some pressure from the headstall or blinkers that causes uneasiness. This, of course, would have a tendency to wear off in running fast, as a tight boot becomes easier if we walk in it. Again, she may have some bruise or tender place on the head which the harness hurts. 2. She may have some discomfort in her teeth, and I have found this to be the cause in many unsuspected cases. I should suspect incipient caries or a hidden abscess. 3. The unthrifty condition may or may not be connected with the shaking of the head. But in this case I should suspect worms. Patent foods should never be given. Watch the droppings very carefully, give a pint of the very finest cold drawn linseed oil; it can do no harm, and will very likely reveal, in the droppings, the parasites. I should crush all her corn; give the hay long (not chop); see she has some rock-salt in her manger, and a pail of water always at hand. I have known a fresh-cut sod of turf in the manger work wonders with an unthrifty horse. Take care the stable is not too hot; there should be such ventilation that no odours should be perceptible when you enter. If any of these plans should be right I should be interested to hear again."]

RIDER'S LEG.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In answer to your correspondent "Huntsman," *re* "Rider's Leg," some years ago I suffered from the same complaint. I strapped my thigh with Mead's adhesive plaster, placing cotton-wool on the outside edges of the strapping to prevent them cutting. I hunted a whole season in this way, when without it I could not jump a single fence. It has the disadvantage of taking a long time to put on, and cannot be worn more than two days without causing irritation, so that it is necessary to put it on fresh nearly every time you hunt. It is more comfortable if used with a layer of Tomlinson's plaster underneath, as this does not irritate so much. Tomlinson's plaster can be had from Tomlinson, chemist, Wigmore Street. It is advisable to shave the leg before putting the plaster on. I have tried various bandages, but this is the only one I found of any use.—J. L. S.

FEEDING THE CALVES.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—It is so very seldom nowadays that one sees a real live milkmaid, that perhaps you may care to publish this photograph of one at work feeding some motherless calves. Their mother's milk is much too valuable a commodity for their consumption, and, indeed, I fear that most of the bull calves will very soon be delivered over to the tender mercies of the butcher, for it will not pay a farmer to rear bullocks bred from dairy cows in these times of competition. In the meantime, they make a pretty picture, and I trust you will be able to find room for it.—S. R.

BIRDS AND FRUIT.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—As no one has replied to the questions of "H. S." about wiring-in fruit trees, from my own experience I have found that the trees should be surrounded by small-meshed wire-netting on strong posts, well tarred before placing them in the ground. The top should not be covered with wire-netting, as the first heavy fall of snow would break the whole thing down on to the trees and sadly damage them; instead of the wire-netting old fish-



netting, as commonly used in gardens, should be put over the top when it is desired to keep birds off the fruit. It is, in my opinion, of the greatest importance to have this netting put in place as soon as the first mild weather sets in in February, as it is then the bullfinches do enormous damage in a few days; it can be removed as soon as the fruit is picked, but I have found no gain by this, as trees outside have been quite as badly infested with caterpillars as those inside, in spite of the birds having free access to them.—C. G. B.

TYRING A WHEEL.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—There is no more interesting place to the youth of a small village than the blacksmith's shop; so many strange and wonderful things are done there. Perhaps the most fascinating of all is the process of putting the metal ring on a cart-wheel. When this operation is being performed it is certain to draw a small crowd of open-mouthed children, and generally one or two idlers of more mature years. There is something mysterious about it to the uneducated mind. The ring is first made to fit the wheel very tightly, and then made red-hot. In this state, of course, it is considerably expanded, so that it is easily slipped on to the wheel. When this is accomplished it is rapidly cooled,



and, contracting, encircles the wooden rim, holding the pieces literally with an iron grip. I enclose a photograph of the latter stage, thinking that perhaps you may care to publish it.—S. C.

TORTOISE EGGS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

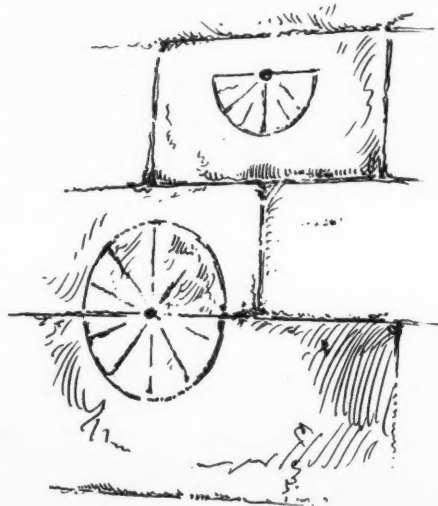
SIR,—I should be glad if any of your readers could give me some information about tortoises' eggs. I kept a good-sized ordinary tortoise for a year, but it died last April. Lately I found in the garden, under the leaves of an iris plant (a favourite haunt of the tortoise), two eggs in a shallow depression in the ground, and not recognising them as any bird's eggs, I wondered if they could be tortoise's. They are a dirty white, with thin shells, and almost round, measuring 3 in. in circumference. If tortoise's eggs, are they valuable, and do they hatch in this climate? The garden is a walled-in one, and in the town, so no rare birds have access to it.—F. B. NEWMAN, 3, Holywell Hill, St. Albans.

OLD SUNDIAL.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The sundial at Godmanchester is an unusually ornate one for the period; but its time division is really no mystery at all. Neither are such dials so uncommon as your correspondent has been led to suppose. There are scores—possibly hundreds—scattered up and down the country. It is not generally recognised that the Saxon division of time was the common one in Northern Europe, and was used in Norway as late as 1814. It was totally distinct from our present twenty-four-hour system. Under it the day was divided into eight periods, known as "tides," consisting of three hours each of our present notation, the "Morgan" starting at 4.30; then followed "Dagr," 7.30 a.m.

till 4.30 p.m., and equalling three tides; then "Aftan," or evening, of one tide; followed by "Nott," or night, again three tides. These tides were originally subdivided only, but later three subdivisions were introduced, and thus eight tides \times three hours = twenty-four hours, our present notation. Churches bear these divisions of time down to the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Often the markings are disposed in an irregular manner, apparently, as, in addition to the tides, often an intermediate line marks the time of some celebration within the church. I enclose a pen-and-ink sketch of two forms of Saxon dial notation on the church of Netherswell, Gloucestershire, sketched as they appear. The one at Godmanchester is a glorified example of these simpler forms, the upper part being simply to carry out the design symmetrically, as they are quite useless, the sun being "down under" during the night.—E. C. MIDDLETON, Stanmore Road, Birmingham.



LATE NESTING.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I do not know whether the circumstance referred to by "Y" in your issue of Nov. 28th is unusual or not; but a wild duck hatched out a brood about ten days ago at an old moated house in Norfolk. The bird made her nest under the drawing-room window, and she was shaded by antirrhinums in flower. There were over a hundred wild-bred ducks on the moat, and some of them paid her a visit each morning, so perhaps they considered her proceedings out of the ordinary course of things. When she hatched out she took the youngsters at once to the moat, but they were promptly rescued.—L.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I see that a correspondent has written recording the fact that a wild duck hatched out her brood on November 12th. Curiously enough, just after reading this letter, I took my gun and went for a stroll to see what I could pick up, and what was my surprise to find a duck's nest with five eggs in it! The bird had only just left, for the eggs were quite warm. Can these late nests have anything to do with the abnormal summer of 1903? I know that ducks do nest at very irregular times, but surely very seldom as late in the season as the end of November, and I fear the young will stand a very poor chance of reaching maturity. It will certainly be interesting to watch them.—F. B.

A HANDY GATE LATCH.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—As most of your readers are aware, there is nothing more irritating than to be obliged to dismount to unfasten a gate when, perhaps, hounds are running hard. You may therefore care to publish the photograph I send, showing a very simple and effective latch, which can easily be opened with the least possible trouble. Perhaps some landowners may be induced to adopt it on their estates, and thus earn the eternal gratitude of all cross-country riders. It is very simple, can be made by any carpenter, and the expense is slight.—R. C.

